

COXHEATH-CAMP.

NOVEL.

COXHEATH-CAMP:

BY A LADY.

NOVEL.

VOL. II.

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# COXHEATH-CAMP:

A

N O V E L.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY A LADY.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

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D<sup>O</sup> U B L I N :

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## C O X H E A T H :

## A N O V E L

## L E T T E R I.

Seeking the bubble Reputation e'en in the cannon's  
mouth.

**Y**ES, my dearest madam, such is the fate and  
folly of the martial passion, that those who in-  
dulge it must either look danger boldly in the face,  
and meet their dissolution undismayed, or forfeit  
their honour and their life in the face of the whole  
world.

I HAVE already told you we have many Ser-  
geant Kites on the Heath, who, by the dint of low  
dexterity and an artful exercise of volubility, have  
allured swains from their soft Arcadia into scenes  
of warlike preparations; and who, to compleat  
the character of the Kites, have long since drop-  
ped the Brother-Soldier, and assumed the stern  
Commander; whilst the toils of the field, toge-  
ther with the disappointment of their innocent  
ambition.

ambition weighs down the spirits of the young recruits, who vainly sigh for the felicity they have renounced, the pipe, the dance, the rural assemblies, the May-day-feast, the sports of liberty, and the joys of peace.

ONE such as I have described, but of first-rate perfection, must, with your good leave, be the sad hero of this my epistle. His age is scarcely nineteen: — as smooth as Hebe's his unrazor'd cheek; — his figure (except where the high finish of education is the question) striking, admirable; — in a word, as my brother is distinguished throughout the Camp by the title of the handsome Cadet, he is known in every quarter by that of the handsome Recruit.

BUT, alas! we are born with as different inclinations as exterior distinctions. Heroes are much the same, says the Poet:

————— the point's agreed,  
From Macedonia's Madman to the Swede,  
The same strange purpose of their lives to find,  
Or make an enemy of all mankind.

In like manner poets, priests, mechanics, philosophers, rustics, bring their peculiar propensity into the world with them, which not only grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength, but has all the confirmation that Custom, Education, and Example can give it; and however this feature of the soul may sometimes be mistaken, defaced, or mutilated, yet is it as impossible to rend it from the parent-stock without destroying the mind, as it would be to demolish an eye without spoiling the face: — so far does Nature triumph over Art, and defy all her works.

THE Dorilas I am speaking of having never seen a red coat until the noble Sea-jeant Kite set his foot in the village of his nativity, was captivated by the *tout ensemble* of his appearance: — the glittering halberd, the gay cockade, the fife, the drum — his eye, his ear was equally enchanted; nor was it in the power of mortal youth to hear the harangue beginning with, “All Gentlemen Volunteers,” so rhetorically addressed to the surrounding multitude, unmoved. — “Gentlemen Volunteers,” was a gilded bait, and the poor gudgeons could do no less than bite; — and we all know that enlisting, like matrimony, is not one of the *ship-knots* of Society.

BEHOLD him then entered into his Majesty’s service! The ensigns of his honourable estate in his hat, and his Royal Master’s picture in his pocket, he is led in triumph through the village to the house of rendezvous, where loyal bumpers are circulated, and every human ear laid asleep, until — the morning; — when, waking from the dead slumbers of unaccustomed inebriety, he finds he is no longer master of himself. His tender and aged mother rushes into the room — his sweet-heart swoons away in his arms!

“AH, unthinking and undone Dorilas! must we never see you more? — You, that was the pride and the joy of your fond mother’s heart, the delight of the nymphs, the envy of the swains, wherefore, wherefore have you pulled this death-stroke on our heads? — Must you be shot at like a dog? — Must you —” But I drop the curtain on this scene, and proceed to introduce my Hero on the martial stage.

AFTER endless fatigues, behold him arrived at his Captain’s quarter’s! — But his Captain, my dear madam, was no Captain Plume; nor did the case



case require it. — He was entrapp'd to his hands, and, instead of the winning behaviour he was taught to expect, he looked the Commander in the first instance upon him, and compleated his repentance for the rash step he had taken.

He is now drawn out to exercise. — The Gentlemen-Soldier has his fusée, unfortunately on the wrong shoulder : — a volley of dire oaths assails his ears, and the big hoarse laugh of vulgar ridicule sinks him into confusion. His toes are not sufficiently turned out ; they are kicked by Sergeant Kite into the proper position. — With what anguish does he recollect the maternal roof, where he was deemed the master-piece of Nature ; and the rural green, where his feats were mentioned with such applause ! — for,

'Tis the curse of noble minds oppress'd,

To compare what they are, with what they ought to be.

IN a moment of his most tender regrets, he receives a letter. His trembling hand can scarcely break the seal. A thousand cruel forebodings shake his soul. — His Daphne — has she survived their parting ? His mother — is she not murdered by his conduct ? — But Heaven is just, and will not fail to punish the sin of filial disobedience. At length he opens it — weeps — endeavours to read the contents through his tears, but endeavours in vain. — He wipes them away — tries again — again — then learns that his beloved mother has taken to her bed — his Daphne fears her death-bed, at the side of which she attends day and night, to give the consolation she herself, alas ! stands so much in need of. No hope of re-union remains with them : their adieus are all the adieus of despair —

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of eternal separation. But there is a World, where love like theirs shall be rewarded; where no Serjeant Kites will rend the softest ties asunder; where tears shall be no more; and where alone they can ever meet again.

WHAT Youth of nineteen, brought up in rural simplicity, is made of adamant! — Our Dorilas hastily commits the paper to his pocket — hems thrice — and thrice — can once more articulate.

HE returns to his tent, and goes through the duties of the day with unusual alacrity. The night's watching succeeds, when he ponders the fatal tidings. Every heart seems light but his. — Has no one then a mother but himself? — nor under his mother's circumstances?

THE Countess de Sevigné says, our thoughts in the evening are a dusky grey; at midnight they are quite black; for which reason it is presumable our midnight resolutions wear a similar complexion.

HIS mother dies before his eyes. — His fond imagination gives unheard-of horrors to the scene. — The gentle, the faithful Daphne shrieks. — Her lamentations pierce his soul. — Not to see them is death. — What then has he to fear from flying to their support? — His presence may do wonders. — They will disguise, they will conceal him, and stern Justice shall all-unavailing demand its sacrifice.

I WILL not sport with your sensibility so far as to send you this humble history incomplete; but, humble as its sorrows are, I must pause before I give you the concluding passages.

THE morning came, and found poor Dorilas unchanged in his resolves; — to which end he got employed as far distant as possible from his corps.

—He

—He performed little miracles;—no burthen was too heavy for his shoulders — no hillock too stubborn for his spade. It became necessary to send to the little ale-house at the extremity of the Heath for somewhat that was wanting : — He solicited to be the messenger, and did not solicit in vain : but no sooner was he assured he had got out of his comrades ken, than he set forward with a beating heart for the village of his Mother — of his Daphne—of all that was dear to him.

THE shades of night returned ; — he nevertheless continued his march : — neither hedge nor ditch could impede his passage—until, entering a town on the frontiers of his native county, at day-break, he heard the outcry of, “ That is he ! — that must be him ! ” — He cast his eyes around — the stricken deer began to weep : — no opening remained for his escape. — His youth, his beauty, his simplicity, could not touch their callous hearts : he was exultingly seized, and thrown into a fearful dungeon.

HERE he lay, however, but a few hours, before a light cart was brought for his more speedy reconveyance to the Camp. His hands were roughly tied behind him ; but his grief was now too big for tears : he bowed his head to his stern fortune, and unresisting, uncomplaining, ascended the dire vehicle.

His eyes were fixed on vacancy during the whole period of his sad journey : not an object did he distinguish, of the many that presented themselves. — He reached the Camp : — the sight of him excited various sensations, according to the hard-nature or humanity of the beholders : — he was shut up in close durance.

THE Court Martial assembled : — he was brought forth ; — and by the following little morse

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of natural eloquence melted the hearts of every individual.

“ I AM a most unhappy youth ! — To save a mother from death I fled from my duty. — Would I could do as much by dying for that fault ! — But she is broken-hearted, that is the sin I ought to be punished for ; — and I have no wish to live — no mercy to ask — — but that my untimely fate may be kept from her knowledge, and the knowledge of — — ”

No doubt he meant his Daphne ; — but words failed him, and he wept bitterly for more than a second ; when recovering himself he added :

“ ’Tis not what I am about to suffer that wrings my heart thus ; — ’tis their suffering ; and I hope it will be believd, when I behave like a man, *that* is the only cause. Those who have mothers, I know, will pity — those who have not must — if they can — despise me. I have done, and submit myself to my Judges.”

The trial was short, — and he was sentenced to be shot.

THE day of execution was a day of sorrow to all ranks on the Heath. The story of his love was in every mouth : — his merit — his mother’s affection and illness — his motives for desertion — his youth — his figure — and how he had wrote, with however rude pencil, in several parts of his dungeon, the lines of a song made in the late Rebellion by an unfortunate young man, who, like himself, when under condemnation, was more anxious about her he loved, than any thing relating to his own condition :

Come, Death ! oh come, thou friendly sleep !

And with my sorrows lay me low :

And should the gentle virgin weep,

Nor sharp nor lasting be her woe !

Then



Then may she think, where-e'er she be,  
No more of my distress nor me, &c.

which were so applicable, so pathetic, so touching — But the law demanded its atonement, and the poor amiable youth must bleed.

THE detachment appointed to conduct him to the fatal spot are at his prison door. — He advances—composed, resigned, manly. He falls into the procession. Not a dry eye can be encountered except his own; he kneels down, claps his hands together in the fervor of silent devotion: — his Daphne, his mother, his own salvation. — he scarcely knows which is most dear to him. — His executioners are duly arranged — he is whispered to ask if he is ready — he pulls his cap over his face—drops his handkerchief—and—instead of the expected death—Heaven and Earth! how beautiful is mercy! Well might the immortal Bard pronounce it twice blessed — he has a pardon read to him — his Majesty's most gracious pardon, in pity to his youth, on condition that he shall enter into the African service. The blood rushes into his cheeks — then back with rapidity to his heart. — He is bled by an attending surgeon; — but the recollection of his mother and his Daphne's joy, at having him thus snatched from the grim tyrant's gripe, is the cordial that restores him. — And restored he shall be, in every sense of the word! The hand that was extended in the hour of his extremity, will not leave its work unaccomplished. Instead of perpetual exile, he shall be constituted a monument of royal benevolence; and his gratitude to his Prince, and his filial piety, shall be the first of moral lessons to the sons and daughters by which the corner of his nativity is inhabited.

THERE



THERE is a tale of woe converted into glad-  
dings! — John Drew and his mistress were im-  
mortalised by the pen of Pope; — could I then for-  
get to weave the thread of this pity-moving story  
into my Camp Annals, of which, indeed, I fear  
it will be considered the chief ornament? — Be it  
so, for the honour of Humanity.

BUT perhaps I should, or more properly per-  
haps I need not by this time inform you, that,  
next to the royal clemency, this youth is indebted  
for his present existence to my Mrs. Mildmay, the  
universal, the never-failing friend of her species.  
— What luxury to a mind, turned as her's is for  
the enjoyment of every good, every liberal ac-  
tion, to have the power of saving a life — of stand-  
ing between a worthy creature and all the horrors  
of a legal cutting-off! — She is, however, the  
only woman I cannot envy the reward of her feel-  
ings. Her purse — the utmost exertion of her in-  
dustrious but barely sufficient on this occasion  
to gain her desired point; it being judged neces-  
sary this poor youth should die, *in terrorem*, for  
the general benefit.

AND now having spun out my Letter to such  
an inordinate length, I can only just ask you how  
you do; — and assure you, that if my wishes can  
avail you in any circumstance of human felicity,  
I will possess a larger share than yourself. —  
Every one here kisses your hands,

And am, &c. &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T.

## LETTER II.

**T**HE report of the day is, that his Majesty's Mar-  
 quee is packed up in order to be pitched on the  
 Heath, as the great preparatory for his reception.—  
 I am elated at the news: for when his gracious self  
 shall walk from tent to tent, the characters of love-  
 alty and well-meriting; so strongly traced out in  
 my dear father's countenance, must engage him  
 to curiosity, to liberality; nay, I will be so bold  
 to write it, to justice.

THE QUEEN too is expected!—What an en-  
 livening of the female *troops* will her presence  
 prove!—To excel each other is now the emula-  
 tion;—and as the passion is a narrow one, it gives  
 birth to many ridiculous contests, all which will  
 cease when once the appearing well in the eyes of  
 Majesty becomes the ambition.

WHAT a model for the Kingdom does the good  
 sense of our royal CHARLOTTE hold forth!—  
 Dress, in her hands, fulfills all the duties of its  
 institution;—it adds to the native amiableness of  
 the person, and, instead of dazzling the eye, com-  
 mends the most forcible impression to the mind of  
 the elegance and taste by which it is dictated.

MORALITY too has high obligations to the  
 Queen of queens.—Conjugal felicity had begun  
 to be deemed, by our Wits, conjugal folly; and  
 to love and obey, a certain token of a tame and  
 abject spirit;—when lo! the Royal Pair took the  
 lead,—rescued the honourable estate of Matrimony  
 from ridicule—and, by maintaining the  
 ground for more than sixteen succeeding years  
 must have effectually rooted out every libertine  
 pique

que and libertine-principle; insomuch that I trust the rising generation will be found turtles, not only in the article of choice, but constancy to their mates, and live and die honouring the highest point of friendship and social intercourse in human existence.

You will judge by this eulogium on Marriage, that my swain and I keep up our soft understanding; — nor are you mistaken: but nothing is more distant in our prospect or intentions than that *catastrophe*. — I love him, I own it, for his behaviour to my father: and he loves me, because — because it is his destiny, my dear; — the common reason for all uncommon events, as hanging, crowning, wedding, &c. &c.

HAPPY is it for me, and right happy do I deem, that you was not *born* to follow a Camp. Had you been born to it, it would have been your fate; — and if your fate, how could you have been to blame for it? For thus would even my fair friend have argued, if my brother and her, not having the fear of God or man before their eyes, rather than submit to a temporary separation, had made a runaway match of it: — and thus argue all the lovely and rash damsels who figure away on the north road, when smarting under the consequences of their ill conduct. But to return to myself: — my happiness in your absence arises from the belief that this youth of my approbation would have tripped up my brother's heels in your favour, at the same time that you had ousted me from his heart. Ha! ha! ha! I must laugh at the pickle you would have found yourself in —

Married in haste,

On my word, you would have repented at leisure

for,

for, to be sure, the sun never shone on so perfect a being! — Why Ferdinand, madam, is a scarecrow to him! — Oh thou of little faith!

HAD I escaped making an acquaintance with the tender passion, I should have concluded, from Lydia's and your mode of bearing it, that it had been a saddening sort of a business, and that sighs &c. were its natural and only food. — So far from it, however, that the passion is as lively and amusing a passion as can be felt, provided it is lighted up in a lively heart. That, I grant you is an essential circumstance; for if it is not profane to borrow the Scripture language on the occasion, "with the sorrowful it will be sorrowful, and with the gay it will be gay," — most complaisantly taking the *ten* of the mind it is habits.

LYDIA, you know, has a fine *penferoso* turn of countenance, and a cadence of expression that goes right to the heart: — Love, therefore, appears to infinite advantage in her person. — In her face which is honoured, like the Empress Poppæa's, with a little cock-up nose, the playfulness of this playful divinity, condescends to be visible. — A picture of our several looks would produce, if not a pleasing, a very whimsical contrast. — But enough, you will say, of this trifling.

WHAT string shall I then touch as a unison to your feelings? — The whole round of possible subjects is open to my pen. In like manner with our first parents, but one prohibition, one restraint is imposed; yet do I wish more anxiously to indulge myself on the forbidden, than to enjoy the given topics. Hence it is plain, that every child of mortality is an Eve.

You



You would have me remember, the penalty of my transgression *will* not admit a comparison with what she was to incur : — but disobedience, my young Lady, is disobedience, let the *quantity* be what it may ; and you must excuse my falling into the commission of it only to gratify an *irresistible* inclination in us both — I to write, and you to read, things that ought not to be read or written.

Mrs. MILD MAY wishes my father could obtain a garrison appointment in return for his services, that he might retire no less from the fatigues, than dangers of the field. — Five wounds, she observes, he has received in five successive engagements, though Providence has *graciously* (a word she utters mentally only) spared his face ; which is surely sufficient to entitle him to such a provision ; — and which, by the bye, I have some notion she is now exerting her interest to obtain for him.

It is, says Belisarius, the misfortune of a Prince not to be able to reward all blood spilt in his service : — it is, however, certain, that George, our present King, carries a list of his Military as well as Naval Officers in his pocket, and reviews, if not directs, every promotion they pass through. — Would one then believe it possible for such a man to permit my father to stand successive years thereon unnoticed ? — From the campaign of the celebrated Wolfe to the year 1778, has he been a Lieutenant. — Now, methinks, it should strike whoever stops a moment upon this ground, that a soldier must be either very unworthy, or very much neglected, to hold one and the same rank for such a length of time : — but this is one of the points that puzzles me, and which I am clear I shall never be able to develope.

You



You are scandalized, it seems, at the idea of our present situation; and tell me, that from all you can pick out of my descriptions, the similar confusion of Characters prevails in a Camp, as of tongues at the building of Babel. But I must beg your pardon for that:—a line is not only drawn, but drawn so nicely, that there is no more danger of mixing with Ladies of a certain cast, than if their professions were wrote on their foreheads. You are curious to know how this point can be managed.—I will tell you:—All men, I hope, are born with a sense of shame; *some* men I know are born with a sense of honour;—and, what is not a little remarkable, the more libertine the principles are in general, the more formal you find them in particular instances. This, you will say, is a paradox; nor do I expect you should solve it. Mark me, then, for I will condescend to throw light on the hidden meaning.

SUCH is the masculine mind (no bad hint to our females in the regulation of our conduct), that though they go about seeking whom they may devour in the persons of the wives, daughters, and sisters of the Community, they are still sure to watch over their own relatives like the Hesperian dragon: nay, a single peep at a damsel so protected, has often proved mortal.

A CAMP is but a kind of larger household—United in a common cause, the cause of their Country, they insensibly fall into a domestic unity.—In a word, as the men are all brothers, so the women are considered by them as so many sisters, whose fame they must defend, and whose morals they ought to preserve from contamination.—Hence, in all the intercourse between the sexes, friendship and politeness mark the bounds;—and believe me, nothing else could prevent its being

scene of licentiousness and carnage.—As for the midnight-revels of these sons of Mars, no modest eye or ear has the remotest acquaintance with them;—and though the *dress* and the *good-natured* ladies, as in the metropolis, come abroad unblushing, and compose as it were a common multitude, at exercise, airings, &c. &c. they never attempt to tread the honourable ground *we* occupy.—Oh ye fairest of Nature's works, why will you forfeit your claims to the honours which await the daughters of Chastity!—In this respect, Virtue bears its reward in its hands.—At their approach, the cloven foot of Vice is clapped behind its choicest votaries.—Can any homage exceed this?—The Bacchanalian roar is checked—the tongue of senseless ribaldry is silenced—the manners are humanized—and so pleasurable is this seeming constraint, that the occasion is voluntarily sought, and the period of experiencing it is distinguished by the most reverential epithets: it is

The feast of reason, and the flow of soul;

the soft, the soothing, the social, hour;—the mountain-head of elegance; the high polish of the masculine character. The contrast has too much shadow for my pencil; I therefore leave it to be pictured by a dark and suitable imagination.

I AM become so expert an horsewoman, that my toe no sooner touches the gallant hand extended for my assistance, than I vault into my seat, and smount with equal grace and agility; and so to-morrowly changed is the course of natural events, that many a Beau and Belle who, before this encampment, would have scorned to be visible until noon, are now met *a cheval* on the Heath by four, or latest by five, in the morning; where they, un-

shrinking, abide the dew ;—behold the glories of the rising sun ;—drink their chocolate, as the Jews eat their passover, with their whips upheld, and the steed pawing with impatience to be gone ;—then scamper away to see Who and Who is together, and feast their eyes on military manœuvres.

A CERTAIN Corps, which shall be *nameless* on their first arrival at the Heath, were so awkward and unpromising in all their movements, that it was despaired ever to bring them into any tolerable training. But, to shew you what industry and practice can effect, they are the most perfect in their evolutions of any corps in the field ; and instead of the toot toot-tooting they used to keep up, fire with the skill and harmony with which your masterly musicians strike the flurs that win up a celebrated chorus.

MY Brother—What a variety of sensations would that little heart of yours prove, if you could see him at exercise !—His uniform is distinguished by a somewhat of ornament in its lapelle from the common soldiers ; but his rank is cheek-bowed with the lowest.

IMAGINE him drawn out—the commanding officer (perhaps a corporal) in front :—“ To the right—the left—the front—the rear—advance—retire—wheel—charge—present—fire.”—What a thousand accidents might befall a lover under such circumstances !—what infinite fatigue must he not endure !—A detachment moves off—it is his day of duty. Behold him stationed before the tents, at due distances—his fusée on his shoulder. He traverses the spot of his limitation—is weary—rests on his arms—walks again. A cloud gathers around—the wind blows—the lightning bespeaks a fearful storm at hand.—It arrives :—a cloud bursts over your lover’s head :—he falls.

shelter in his box, but, alas! it has no door to screen him from the tempest.—It is the hour of relieving the centinels :—A little body of men present themselves for the purpose.—The usual fatigues are interchanged, in spite of the raging elements ; but it is not to the guard-room he is to be conducted :—all wet as he is, he is only put on a new watch—and the pitiless pelting of the Heavens will be over before his interval of repose arrives.—You weep—Renounce then every idea of being the wife of a Soldier ;—for he must either

Have honour loving you,

or he must not love at all.—Would you disgrace the man of your heart—fix an indelible stain on his character—bow his head down with shame—point the finger of Scorn against his person, and sell this to purchase an inglorious safety?—No—surely no—strength of mind becomes our sex,—as it is ours to reward, so we ought to inspire our favourite Hero.—The young Cadet shall perform wonders in your name.—It shall be his mistress's blow that fells his enemy at his foot : in her name shall he conquer ; and her applause shall be his brightest wreath, his triumphal crown.

Recover this—and you shall hear further from

Your, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.



## LETTER III.

**C**RUEL Ella! Why will you thus continually tear open the wounds of my heart? No sooner does reason, filial duty, and necessity begin to heal them, than your pen penetrates them to the quick;—they bleed afresh, their utmost anguish is renewed, and their cure, alas! becomes a ten-fold labour.

MATERNAL tenderness once concealed a Hero, Ella. A Hero, (as Homer tells us) did not disdain to wear a feminine habit for his disguise.—No reflection is, however, cast on the son's or on the mother's conduct: parental feelings sanctified the deed.—Will you require the softer passion to do violence on itself, and betray to slaughter, from patriotic frenzy, the youth of its idolatry?

I LOVE the author of the tragedy of Mahomet, for one sweet thought which he has given to his dying Palmira: When the heart is pure (says she), "small is the difference, easy is the change—"  
"lover's passion for a sister's fondness." May I not then, without the smallest deviation from the female character, experience the cares, the fears of friendship, the sacred friendship of maternity, where your brother is concerned? Brought up as we were together, may not his person, his safety be dear to me, compatibly with the nicest sense of delicacy, and the *ermine* of modesty? But you are no longer the soft, the sympathising Ella.—A Camp is the fit residence only of Amazonian dames.—Cupid, instead of reposing on his mother's lap, there rests his head on the hard bo-



form of Mars.—The clangor of arms is familiar to his ear ; his little heart feels not the dying groans ; fierceness and ambition tip the darts he scatters around ; scars, shattered limbs, are estimated beauties by his Camp-votaries ; and the passion he inspires, is transferable at will. The living hero rivals the dead—tramples on his corpse—injures his manes.—Ferdinand, *your* Ferdinand—for such is the custom of the World, I must not call him *mine*, though as nearly allied to him by every affectionate tie—was not born for such savage scenes : his heart is gentle.—But I forbear :—I may weep, Ella—the song you quote upon me allows it : Yes, I *may* weep, though he *must* go. My father often enquires after the *amiable* girls. That is his distinction ; not choosing to mention a name offensive to his ears : so liable, in numberless instances, is the human mind to err, and mistake the best friends for the worst foes.

I HAVE not the courage, I own, to make the experiment ; but, notwithstanding your opinion of Sir Ferdinand, I am more than half persuaded, if he knew all, he would relax his high claims for his daughter, and sit down content with giving her happiness.

On the rigid principles of virtue, Mr. Rivers's conduct may, perhaps, be virtuous : but what think you of your brother's flexibility and my resignation? He has not only been broke in upon in his tender schemes, but forced out of the professional track his nature and education so well fitted him to pursue :—he is not a man for bloodshedding, but preaching the gospel of peace.—As to my merit on the occasion, I leave it to your own justice to determine.

LYDIA, at the present period, is my most agreeable correspondent.—Her pen, though she

labours apparently to confine it to chearful subjects, will deviate into the pathetic, the sympathetic.—Yours is all levity or satire. The first hurts me; the second alarms me; for satire is a mark of self-possession ill-suited to the circumstances of your friend; and the gentle, generous turn of sentiment I always gave you credit for.

IN the tale of your Recruit, for example, you should have spared me, softened as I am by my disappointments, and not have interested me even to the pointed pieces for his destruction. I had nearly lost the delightful surprise your playfulness intended me, by my tear of tribute to the untimely fate of one so worthy; but, luckily, a word caught my eye, which changed my mourning into rejoicing.

WHAT a prize, my dear, have you drawn in the Lottery of Life!—A youth of fortune, accomplishments, of liberality, follows you like your shadow; unchecked, unconstrained, even in that father's presence to whom I am indebted for all my.—But no matter—the goodness of his heart sanctifies the austerity of his proceedings in your sight; and poor I am deemed a peevish, fretful girl, who cannot trust her lover's constancy, or rely on his truth, at the distance of two or three score miles.

I SHALL write to your sister next post; and as I am not sufficiently pleased with you to put any commission into your hands, will not so much as remember Ferdinand, but conclude myself.

Your, &c.

CAROLINE FLETCHER.

LET

## L E T T E R I V.

THE Royal Marquee adorns our plains. You have, no doubt, read the pompous description of it inserted in the news-papers. Fighting in topography is a truly British idea; but believe me, the martial rather than the princely character has been the object, in the construction of this celebrated Camp-Equipage; and, though perfectly compleat, it is totally free from parade, tinsel, and folly.

THE Londoners had been down to view the spot marked out for its erection; they now pour upon us in their one horse chaises, to feast their eyes after a still more delicious manner;—men, women, and children.—Blessed Heaven! that in so sensible a land some statute is not instituted, as in cases of lunacy, whereby the body, purse, and reputation of the individual may be secured on certain occasions. Though let me correct myself:—The Camp influenza spares neither age nor sex;—therefore my scheme for the benefit and honour of my Country would be impracticable.

A HABERDASHER, his lady, a young damsel his lady's sister, and a little boy and girl his children, arrived at the desired haven about four o'clock yesterday afternoon in a one-horse chaise, followed together, you may be sure as close as bale goods for an East-India voyage.

THE Encampment is three miles in length.—The poor beast stood panting and wagging his tail with fatigue, insomuch that it was thought, if they attempted to make it draw them the extent of the scene they came to view, he would fall

down dead in their service : he was therefore led gently on to the little alehouse (already *immortalized* by my pen), in order to be refreshed, &c. and his conductor had orders to return with another horse, (if another could be had for love or money) to convey them to Maidstone.

THE company then adjourned to a house, or rather tent, of public resort on the Heath, to recover their spirits after so long a journey, and adjust their head-dress. But such was their impatience to enter in the amusements of the place, that they sallied forth in less than half-an-hour to walk over the ground I have described.

THE woman was, it seems, far advanced in her pregnancy, and the children had never had the small-pox. The heat of the weather was excessive, and the toils they had passed through severe : —they nevertheless advanced from tent to tent —that is, peeped in as they passed by—and stopped a second or so at each succeeding *marquée*.

MRS. HABERDASHER (for I have forgot her name) began by this time to feel herself much indisposed. Her colour went and came, 'till her husband took the alarm. But what was to be done ? She must either deny the charge of ill health, or consent to quit the delightful field. She preferred the gratifying her curiosity to every other consideration. until she fainted away in her sister's arms.

A LIEUTENANT, near whose *marquée* she was, humanely permitted her to be conveyed there, little foreseeing the consequence ; —for lo ! she was soon announced in labour, and incapable of being removed. The Lieutenant was at his wits end ; —and on communicating his distress to some of his Brother-Officers, found the laugh



so much against him, that he execrated himself no less than the trick his evil stars had played him.

CONTRARY, however, to all expectation, she grew so much better as to be put into a carriage, and reached a farm-house, before she made her husband a present of another daughter.

THE report this morning is, that she is quite as well as can be expected, but that the little boy and girl, dragged from London on this Camp expedition, have sickened; it is believed, for the small-pox: and, to crown the whole, the man's circumstances, on inquiry, prove to be such, as threaten him with a *Whereas* by Christmas next.

YET don't be severe, my lovely girl, on this inconsiderate and unhappy pair; but remember the hundreds of equally absurd and extravagant people the sun has shone upon, within these few months, in this quarter of the kingdom, and, in pity of their necessities, draw a veil over their folly.

THE few guineas to have been expended in this most *pleasurable* journey were, moreover, borrowed on *usurious* terms: Mrs. Mildmay, even Mrs. Mildmay, shakes her head; but her heart will be open; and perhaps what now appears their greatest misfortune, may turn out the groundwork of their future prosperity:—I insist upon it you have charity enough to join me in an Amen!

As I came from Mildmay-Hall, a few hours ago, what a sight for the honour of Britain did my eyes encounter!—Two single-horse chaises having met in their passage to and from the Camp, the *phleatons* would needs dispute the way with each other. The gentleman and his family whose horse's head was turned from the metropolis, claimed his privilege;—the gentleman bound for London asserted his right to keep the road, and



heroically declared, he would sit there till midnight rather than submit to break the way.

THIS cool insolence (for he bid fair to hold his resolution) so wound up his opponent, that he gave him notice of the shock he was about to receive. He remained immoveable—until the jaded animal, making one great effort to fulfil the wishes of his master, pulled the carriage, under the weight of which his shoulders groaned, suddenly forward—and behold! they were both instantly overset.

THEIR condition at our approach, was no less whimsical than disastrous. The ladies—for there was a brace in each chaise—were beyond all description discomposed:—cushions, curled black pins, overspread the spot of their humiliation;—and she who had displayed fine auburn locks before her fall, was covered with confusion to find nothing left on her head but a few grey hairs.

MOREOVER, a silk shoe tambooured in high taste, being torn from a fair damsel's foot, betrayed those fractures in the toes of her stocking, she had omitted to repair in her impatience to reach the Camp. Disgrace and exposure was, however, the only consequence of their misconduct; and as Mrs. Mildmay conceived they were too near the Heath alehouse to incur any danger by the accident, she bid her coachman go on, and left them to refit themselves at leisure, saying  
 “we should always distinguish between the ridiculous and the unfortunate; and though we  
 “relieve the latter, rather promote than oppose  
 “the just punishment of the former.”

THESE are, nevertheless, the daily incidents we meet with. Clouds of dust darken the air, and the clatter of carriages stupor the ear; but the

true point of folly is, that none but those who can afford to stay some time amongst us, can judge of our pleasure or our pains, or carry away with them the simplest idea of

What a charming thing's a battle!

I HAVE got a new lover!—nothing less, I assure you, than the Chaplain of my father's regiment;—a fly, sleek, insinuating fellow, with a right honourable patron at his back. This, my dear must be the high road to the poor Lieutenant's promotion. Nor is it a random-shaft, but a mortal wound he has received; and you must be prepared for the event, when you recollect the *yieldingness* of my nature. He quotes whole texts of Scripture in support of the wisdom, the purity of his passion; at the same time that, in the true spirit of worldly-mindedness, he hints at the *eligibility* of the offer.

We shall try how far it is my destiny to be the wife of a Priest—a thorough-bred Priest—who, I am satisfied, could not withhold even his *Cura* from his patron, should the loan be requested—so super-abundant is his gratitude!

No reply whatever will I make to the melancholy medly the last post brought me, but put up a bill in the parish-church of Mildmay-Hall for the restoration of your *good-humour*, the absence of which is the only abatement I can make in your claims to perfection; and may the prayers of the congregation prove successful!

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

## LETTER V.

The youth in the cart has the air of a Lord,  
And we cry, There dies an Adonis!

**N**OW if going to Tyburn can so improve a young fellow's figure, I beg leave to ask you, what effect falling in battle must have on the impassioned heart! It is worth a man's while to get shot, to be so *tenderly* lamented.

Shouldst thou, (but Heav'n avert it!) shouldst thou bleed,

To stop thy wounds my finest lawn I'd tear, &c.

Such is the language of Prior's Emma to her supposed fugitive, to engage him to permit her to share all the miseries, the dangers of his exile.—will, however, own to you, as proof that I am not quite callous, that even a sham-fight, of which I was a spectator, has so unhinged me by its comparative view with the horrors, the carnage of a real one, that I begin to wish I had not the sin of disobedience to answer for, lest the death of my Soldier should be my punishment. Well might my dear mother seek to save her children's sensibility from the stabs she must have experienced during the five racking periods my father was called forth to face the enemy! I am chilled at the bare recollection, and beseech you to benefit by the hint.

How tenderly must I not then feel for our Lydia, and how earnestly must I not wish, peace restored to her bosom, by the however miraculous restoration of the youth she deploras, given

her again from death!—How it would endear a true lover!—And thus, I insist upon it, with few exceptions, is the measure of our happiness proportioned to the degree of distress we have patiently sustained. *Patiently*, madam, is my word.

BUT, however I may affect to play the Stoic, I am at heart a mere, mere woman; nor can I raise my imagination to an idea of distress beyond that of being separated, for *ever* separated, from the object of our softest attachment, our sublimest friendship.—An ugly tremor hangs upon my spirits.—I would, but cannot shake it off; therefore, with your good leave, this shall be (if my memory deceives me not) the shortest letter you ever yet received from,

Yours, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LET.



## LETTER VI.

Heaven, that makes Mankind its care,  
Guards the Brave, to serve the Fair.

**I** AM all in a flutter, my dear madam ! My pen trembles in my hand ! — But life is nothing more than one great Romance ; so you will, perhaps, be less surprised than myself at what I am about to relate.

It was settled that our round of visits should run from Mildmay-Hall to my father's tent ; from my father's tent to Melvin's, and from Melvin's to Mildmay-Hall ; an etiquette highly-pleasing to all parties. My father, I perceive, drew Melvin in to throw the connexion wider in the eyes of the Camp, and leave it doubtful, whether Ferdinand, or Ferdinand's young friend was the lord of the widow's wishes, who, from her large fortune, is the lady of every unmarried man's wishes on the Heath.

It was now Mrs. Mildmay's turn to entertain, and the whole friendly circle was assembled at the Hall.—The dinner-bell had rung—the servants and covered the table according to the bill of fare—when Melvin was informed a gentleman enquired for him. The gentleman was desired to walk in without ceremony, and partake of the family dinner.—It was Captain Davies, of the East Indiaman.

“ I HOPE, Ladies,” said he, addressing Mrs. Mildmay and me, “ I shall both surprise and oblige you, for here is your admired stranger,”  
introducing

introducing the young fellow we had seen on ship-board.

My father jumped over the table, I believe, and Lydia swooned away in Ferdinand's arms. — It was Wilson—the Wilson whose death she had so long and deeply deplored!—the human nerves, madam, are not calculated to sustain such strokes. — As for him, poor fellow! he stood motionless, in one of those fine attitudes we of this generation must never hope to behold again. — Garrick himself would have acknowledged the likeness; and there was nothing more wanting to render it a first-rate theatrical scene, than Wilson's crying out, “Let me not breathe, lest I destroy this vision.—Still, still 'tis here!—without me, as “within me!—’Tis she! ’tis she!”—In a word, Lydia revived, and we were the happiest of mortals.

He begged we would not ask him on that occasion, for the particulars of his story; it was a melancholy one, and would interrupt the general satisfaction.

“RIGHT! my own boy!” said my father, making him again by the hand; — “we have you once more amongst us, and we will enjoy your restoration. It will be time enough to-morrow to tell us by what miracle we obtained the blessing.”

THAT celebrated thought of Gay's is, my dear madam, tinged by the gloom of his own disappointments:

Friendship-like Love, is but a name,  
Unless to one we stint the flame,

says he. “’Tis no such thing, say I. — Friendship has its gradations, and Love is the achme; I mean the

the love that ends in matrimony: but never suppose that the liberal mind may not extend its connexion *ad infinitum*, without losing an atom of its force, its social fire. Such, however, is my creed; and I find it supported by the opinion of the greatest Writers, who can be a citizen of the world without this *malleability* of affections; — for Friendship, as well as Self-love, may be brought under that fine description of Pope's:

Friendship but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
The center mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,  
And still another and another spreads:  
Friends, parents, neighbour, first it will embrace,  
Its country next, and next all human race.

THE love of a friend is but a more refined kind of Self-love. — A *second self* is a common epithet with polite authors; — the medicine of life, the great Solomon pronounces it; — and may this sublime spark, this emanation of the Divinity be the last extinguished, and the last extinguishable part of my existence! — This, if you think proper, may be called my rhapsody on friendship; but I am lifted up to the clouds, and the highest human flight is all incapable of doing justice to my feelings. — Need I add, that we passed an evening of glorious satisfaction.

WILSON would attend my father to Camp, and it was settled he should sleep with Ferdinand. — Captain Davies was obliged to go early in the morning to Chatham, and stay the day; we therefore invited ourselves to breakfast with Mr. Rivers senior, whose marquée is so commodiously situated, that we can have every thing sent in from

from a coffee-house and tavern in the rear of his  
line, on the shortest notice.

I NOW trust, all our rough storms are blown  
over, and that my future epistles will be fraught  
with agreeable intelligence. Nothing my sweet  
girl is wanting but a golden shower, to enable  
Ferdinand to ask your hand with a good grace,  
and ask it successfully; and shape out some course  
for a pair of true lovers, whose poverty is almost  
equal to their virtues; and who cannot, like the  
Cameleon, feed on air — *alias*, the truest love. —  
As for Melvin, he seems to look as if he was sure  
of me; but perhaps he may find himself mistaken.  
He is a very pretty fellow, and has a very pretty  
fortune: An East-India Captain, is, however, at  
least a twenty-thousand-pounder; and where the  
mind is disinterested, the odd five will never have  
sufficient weight to turn the scale. We shall soon  
see how matters will go with

Your most affectionate

ELLA RIVERS

L E T.



## LETTER VII.

OUR breakfast this morning was a truly tragic-comic scene. The beaux and belles were no sooner assembled, than Mrs. Mildmay, with a sweetness that would unlock the closest heart, asked Wilton if he intended to reassume his military occupation.

He replied, with a glow of countenance that was a sufficient comment on his words, "No, madam; I will not serve a Prince who can let Mr. Rivers rank at this time of day, and at home, under his immediate cognizance, a Lieutenant!"

"How then, my generous cavalier, do you mean to dispose of yourself?"

He looked down, sighed, and answered, "he was at present wholly undetermined, except as to the article of being a soldier!"

"If you had been a married man," said Mrs. Mildmay, "I would have besought you to accept, till something better offered, of my land-stewardship. There is a Lodge quite as agreeably situated, and quite as highly finished, as the Hall, only in miniature; where an amiable couple, I must think, could spend two or three hundred a year very pleasantly.—Don't you think so, Mr. Melvin?"

"THE happiest and most eligible situation on earth!"

"WHAT pity," replied Mrs. Mildmay, "it is, then, Mr. Wilton is but just arrived in England! The World is so busy, and at the

"same

“same time so good-natured, that was I to en-  
 “tain a batchelor in character of my *homme*  
 “*d'affaires*, they would instantly give him to me  
 “for a husband. Had you been a longer time  
 “amongst us, I should not have despaired of see-  
 “ing you duly qualified for my great office;  
 “but these matrimonial unions,” looking slyly at  
 “my father, “require more patience and deliberation  
 “on than accords with my convenience; especi-  
 “ally,” added she, humourously viewing Lydia  
 “and her swain, “when the heart is wholly un-  
 “touched, and has all its gradations to run  
 “through, of *choice, acquaintance, and nuptial*  
 “*preparation.*”

“You shall not my dear madam,” said my  
 father, “always outgo me in kindness to my fa-  
 “mily; though I can perceive you have laid a  
 “trap for my consent. All that I could have  
 “asked of Heaven for a beloved and amiable  
 “child, your goodness has provided; therefore  
 “take her Wilson! My approving voice, and  
 “the paternal blessing, is all I have to bestow.”

I was so little prepared for this *dénouement*,  
 that I burst into tears of joy, when Melvin (I  
 shall never forgive him the piece of wit, as I sup-  
 pose he called it) hastily seizing Mr. Rivers’s  
 hand, cried, “And have you then no blessing for  
 “me?—Bless me, bless me also, oh my father!”  
 —which produced a laugh at my expence: but he  
 may, perhaps, repent his vivacity as long as he  
 lives.

“UPON my honour,” said my father, “you  
 “are all in a plot against me; and this, I  
 “imagine, appears to you my unguarded mo-  
 “ment. But though you have my highest ap-  
 “probation, and are, I can perceive, perfectly  
 “*en train* with all parties, yet you must excuse  
 “me,

“ me, if I let your matrimonial petition lie some  
 “ little time longer unanswered on my table. —  
 “ The World has nothing to do with a young  
 “ couple Mrs. Mildmay has provided for ; but  
 “ should you take Ella, the daughter of a poor  
 “ Lieutenant, during the campaign to wife,  
 “ every mouth would be open against me, and I  
 “ should be said to have snapped at a young fel-  
 “ low while his resolution was warm. — You  
 “ ought not, my dear Melvin, to look disap-  
 “ pointed ; for my expressions have painted my  
 “ feelings ill, if they have not told you I shall  
 “ be happy, at a proper period, to be allied to  
 “ you ; nor shall Ferdinand fail to find me a fa-  
 “ ther, if ever I have the power of proving my-  
 “ self such.”

HERE was another allusion to the secret avenue  
 of our prosperity ! — Why will this best of fathers  
 be kind only by halves ? Why not tell us, my dear  
 madam, the nature of his hopes, that we might  
 hope with him ? — But he has a right to do as he  
 pleases, and I will be content.

MRS. MILDMAy proposed having the wed-  
 ding a private and a speedy one. — “ We need  
 “ not,” said she, “ give a history of the young  
 “ gentleman’s pretensions to the lady’s hand, or  
 “ mention the era of their first tender attach-  
 “ ment ; it is sufficient to announce them for man  
 “ and wife to such as deserve so much attention  
 “ from us : and as I really am distressed for a  
 “ person to supply poor Lisimore’s place, and  
 “ shall have my affairs in terrible *derangement* un-  
 “ less I am early suited, I think next Monday  
 “ (which is five days from this our consultation)  
 “ ought to be the day.”

My father submitted the whole management to  
 her wisdom and friendship ; and thus we shall  
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have a *Mrs. Wilson* next week in our family.——  
I shall expect a letter of congratulation—a cheerful, a rejoicing letter from you on the occasion.

My father now enquired into the adventures *Wilson* had met with since their separation, and received the following very extraordinary particulars:

“It was old *Wilson*, as *Lydia* had an account from her friend, by whose orders his return home with the litter was cut off, and his consequential treatment nearly such as was described. Finding his father’s temper grow more and more austere and inflexible; Frank, the son, began to meditate an escape, and resolved to take all the dangerous chances on his head. He accordingly watched an opportunity, and with three pistoles only in his pocket became a fugitive.

“On reaching a little town, he was kindly entertained by an old man and his wife, for the first night of his journeying; and early next morning set forward, to the best of his judgment, for the spot of my father’s residence. The day was intensely hot, and he was obliged to climb a tree to shelter himself from the scorching rays of the sun. In this situation, a sort of *Banditti* came riotously along;—and on perceiving him, in the wantonness of their hearts were for shooting at him, as a good mark. But changing their minds, he was commanded to descend, and shew cause why his life should be spared.

“WHAT does valour avail a man under such circumstances as these? The thought of his beloved *Lydia* gave a value to his existence beyond even the ties of nature, and he resolved to comply with every possible injunction, to soften,



“ soften, to soothe, to engage them to mercy : he  
 “ therefore hastened to present himself on his feet  
 “ before them ; and replied to their interroga-  
 “ tions, that he was a poor unfortunate young  
 “ man, who had fled from a stern master, and  
 “ was wandering to a place where he hoped he  
 “ should get employment. They surveyed him  
 “ in much the same manner as the Smithfield  
 “ dealers do their purchases ; allowed him to be  
 “ a very decent fellow ; and that as his life would  
 “ do them more good than his death, he should  
 “ live ; so bid him be satisfied. They then  
 “ opened a wallet, and spread what it contained  
 “ of refreshment on a bank, and suffered him to  
 “ participate ; after which they set off, and he  
 “ was compelled to accompany them.

“ NINE days did he herd with these *savages* ;  
 “ —savages by nature, however calling them-  
 “ selves civilized ; — who subsisted by rapine,  
 “ and sanctified the most daring outrages with  
 “ the name of retaliation. — The whole country,  
 “ said they, is a state of warfare — brother against  
 “ brother, son against father. We free-booters  
 “ then pay them only in their own coin ; and  
 “ whether rebels or loyal subjects, they deserve  
 “ to smart, to teach them to feel for the distresses  
 “ of their neighbours.

“ IN the course of their travels, they met with  
 “ some Spanish agents, who are employed to  
 “ furnish the Brazils, and the other possessions of  
 “ his Most Catholic Majesty, with slaves, &c.  
 “ to one of whom they sold him ; — and he was  
 “ soon put on board an Acapulco sloop, and con-  
 “ veyed to a remote part of the South Conti-  
 “ nent.

“ THE person for whom he had been pur-  
 “ chased was an old gentleman, who had made

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“ repeated voyages to the East, and was supposed to be immensely rich ; but having outlived a wife and three beloved children, he had retired from all commerce, as it were, with the world, and was as abstemious and as pious as a Bramin.

“ WILSON, in the instant of his presentation, perceived a ray of benevolence in his master’s countenance ; nay, fancied, allowing for the difference of their ages, that he was very like Colonel Rivers : he therefore resolved to serve him with all his heart, until he should come to a knowledge of his disposition.

“ DON JEROME was pleased with him ; but your Spaniards can ill brook a *foreign* favourite : he accordingly covered his growing approbation of the unfortunate youth under the dignity of reserve, and thus saved him from a little million of dangerous enemies.

“ HERE he dragged on fifteen months of his existence, till hope itself began to expire ; when one morning, as he worked, his ear caught certain sounds that fixed him to the spot he was on with surprize and horror. It was, my dear madam, the conspiracy of five slaves to murder and rob his master. The time when, place where, and means how, he learned from their indiscretion ; for it was not accident, but the prosecution of his public task, which had brought him so near them. The point was how they would behave, if they discovered their error ; whether they would give him his life, or bury the secret with their stilletos in his bosom : they, however, happily departed without perceiving him, and he retired to ponder on the conduct he should pursue.

“ As

" As he had quitted his labour without leave,  
 " he was forced to counterfeit sudden indisposi-  
 " tion. The old gentleman's humanity was  
 " touched; he came himself to see him, and ad-  
 " minister a cordial with his own hand: but they  
 " were not alone. Wilson was so much agitated,  
 " that he could not hold the glass to his lips:  
 " the benevolent old man did not disdain to assist  
 " him, when he pressed his assisting hand with  
 " such earnestness, and looked so meaningly up  
 " in his face, that he communicated a somewhat  
 " of his alarms to his master's bosom, who with  
 " great presence of mind cried out, He is dying!  
 " Run and call for help.

" THE lad who had sat with him being gone, he  
 " told the poor old gentleman in a few words his  
 " danger, who embraced him as his guardian-  
 " angel, and wetted him with his tears.— I had  
 " a son, who, had he lived, would now have  
 " been much about your age, cried he; and I  
 " might have expected my preservation from his  
 " activity and tenderness. — You have performed  
 " a child's part by me, and, instead of my slave,  
 " shall henceforth be a child to me. — Several  
 " men coming into the room prevented his saying  
 " more, and Wilson being pronounced better,  
 " was left to his repose.

" THE bloody and diabolical business was to be  
 " accomplished that very night. Fifteen per-  
 " sons formed his whole family, five of whom  
 " had already conspired against him; and Hea-  
 " ven only knew how far the others might be  
 " tampered with. There was, however, no  
 " time to be lost.—He selected three who stood  
 " highest in his good opinion, and sent them to  
 " see how the poor youth went on, with orders

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“to call him, if they found him worse. He was much worse, and Don Jerome flew to his apartment.

“He pressed him in his arms; besought him to live for his sake (for despair had actually thrown him into the condition he at first counterfeited); and telling the three servants the nature of his obligations to Wilton, he asked them if they would stand by him in his hour of distress. They declared themselves ready to die in such a cause, and engaged to strengthen their party before the evening, so as to be able to give the russians a warm reception.—They were as good as their word. The five original conspirators were the only foes he had to fear. The next question was, to take them in their own toils, and dispatch them, to a man; without hesitation or mercy.

“NIGHT arrived.—The poor old gentleman shut himself up for half an hour, Wilton apprehends, in prayer. He then repeated his visit. My dear boy, said he, be careful of your own safety. A violent death, even to a man on the verge of the grave as I am (for I am upwards of seventy) has its terrors. Nature revolts at the idea, and bids resistance: I however, would rather fall, than survive my deliverer. It never struck me till this moment, that it is possible some fond parent may weep your loss with the same anguish I have done the death of my boy. “Your education, your principles, bespeak you born to better fortune:—but I will enquire into every particular, if I see to-morrow’s dawn. As to my wealth, the bait of murder, I will defend it to reward my friends;—the only value it can have with one who has not an heir to enjoy it. Be-



" were then, of rushing unnecessarily into dan-  
 " ger. I must embrace you to-morrow morning,  
 " or I shall agonize, not rejoice, at beholding the  
 " the light.—They parted, and the bloody scene  
 " came on. The poor old gentleman's friends  
 " disposed themselves judiciously, and effected  
 " every desired purpose. The russians were cut  
 " off, and Willson escaped unhurt.—But such  
 " was the shock Don Jerome's nerves had re-  
 " ceived, that he sickened on the morning of his  
 " deliverance, and went off in a few months in  
 " a deep decline.

" WHEN he found his dissolution approach, he  
 " called his attendants about him, consisting of  
 " his faithful servants alone, for he would not  
 " think of adding to his family after the night of  
 " assassination; and having a parcel of lots  
 " ready prepared in the crown of his hat, he  
 " bid them draw, and know their fortune. The  
 " first who put his hand in found himself master  
 " the house and gardens, with many valuable *et*  
 " *ceteras*, so soon as Don Jerome should expire.  
 " The second had a portion of silver, which gra-  
 " tified his utmost wish. Thus every lot gave  
 " satisfaction to the adventurer.—And now Wil-  
 " son was called upon to read his fate! The pa-  
 " per he had drawn intitled him only to the waist-  
 " coat his master generally wore, and which  
 " appeared to him to be almost thread-bare.  
 " And if you love me, said the dying Don, you  
 " will wear it for my sake. Let me put it on  
 " for you, with my tenderest blessing. Here is,  
 " however, my dear boy, a purse of Spanish  
 " gold to pay your passage to the European con-  
 " tinent, and remember Providence will be  
 " your guide and protection, for your care to  
 " close my eyes in peace.—He put on the waist-

" coat

"coat to please him, and watched by him all the night.—At four in the morning he departed.

"DON JEROME had conjured him to withdraw himself immediately on his decease, without even taking leave of his companions. He followed his body to the grave, wherein it was obliged to be deposited a few hours after his departure, shed a pious tear to his memory, and walked off from thence unobserved: and getting a tattered cloak at the first village by way of disguise, he at length, by the dint of perseverance and fatigue, reached the sea-shore, and was taken on board an Acapulco kind of packet bound for the Philippine Islands.

"HAVING reposed himself a necessary time, he enquired how he should proceed to Europe. There was no other way, at that period, than by advancing farther to the East. In a word, he was forced to go to China; and being attacked by a fever, lost his passage for that season.

"THE year following he embarked, and came with a prosperous gale for near half the voyage;—when a tempest overtook them, and reduced them to the extremity of trusting to the long-boat for safety. Their provisions were all exhausted, and having no prospect of escaping death, either by famine or drowning, despair sat on every face. What then must be their joy on beholding a sail only a few leagues distant! They strained every nerve to meet their good fortune,—and the ship bearing down in the same latitude, soon brought them within gun shot of her.—She was a Portuguese bound for Lisbon.

“ At Lisbon they arrived, where he again took  
 “ a fever; and being kindly attended by an old  
 “ man’s daughter in whose house he lodged, the  
 “ Don conceived the highest resentment against  
 “ him;—and, in order to be revenged on him  
 “ for alienating his child’s affections from him,  
 “ as he called it, before he was perfectly recover-  
 “ ed, decoyed him, under pretence of taking the  
 “ air, on board a small Chinese trader, then in  
 “ the harbour.

“ It was in vain to remonstrate! To China  
 “ he went a second time, and from thence to  
 “ Bengal, where he was set on shore, and meet-  
 “ ing by accident with Captain Davies, formed  
 “ an acquaintance with him, engaged a passage  
 “ in his ship, and with a small venture purchased  
 “ at Pekin returned to England, where Providence  
 “ had made him ample amends for all his suffer-  
 “ ings by restoring him to love and friendship.”

AND thus ended this poor young man’s travels! But methinks his was a mean reward for the saving of Don Jerome’s life—an old quilted sattin waistcoat.—He has promised to shew it us,—and assures us, there is no curiosity in it whatever.—Yet see how gracious, nevertheless, Heaven is in all its dispensations! Had he drawn the house or other local advantage, instead of now being in the arms of his friends, we should possibly have never seen him more. He says he reveres the old garment, not only for having clipped the departed Don’s body, but for having been the companion of all his distresses.—I shall tell you no other news till I write to tell you of Lydia’s nuptials; so believe me

Your, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T

## L E T T E R VIII.

Now the happy knot is tied,  
Lydia is a charming bride!

I ALONE, you must know, accompanied them to church, where Ferdinand waited to give his sister away. I wish I could do as much for my dear Mrs. Mildmay; but Mr. Rivers senior, madam, is totally *insensible*, however susceptible you may have found Mr. Rivers junior, and I am quite out of patience with him.

MRS. MILDMAI called me into her closet after breakfast.—“You must, my good girl,” said she, “present this bank-note to your sister, as “out of your own pocket-money, otherwise it “will be *painfully* accepted.” It was for two hundred pounds.—“There is no going to house-keeping (added she) with an empty purse.”—Lydia blushed, and thanked me; but I believe suspected the fountain from whence my bounty flowed, and immediately, as she thought herself in duty bound, put it in her husband’s care.—Nor will he abuse the trust.—Ah Don Jerome! Don Jerome! would my Mrs. Mildmay have rewarded me, if I had saved her life, with nothing but an old quilted satin petticoat!—I wonder the man, my dear, can rest in his grave.

MRS. WILSON returned to Camp after breakfast, where we shall join her in the afternoon; but her husband was so impatient to enter upon his office, that Mrs. Mildmay could not refuse him instant possession of poor Lisimore’s accounts, over which he is now poring, in order to render



her right worthy service, in return for the obligation she has conferred on him.

THE Londoners are relapsed into their fashionable distemper, and nothing now is heard of but the *Camp-influenza*. Away they trot it in their one-horse-chaise; — grand-children, grand-mothers, every relative, from the greatest to the least, rush in upon us. The tavern-keepers have hardly room for them to take even a temporary repast; and was you but to see the consumption of provisions, you would conclude the animal creation bled for us alone. The royal flag waves gracefully with the wind, and never was sight so sought after, or so enjoyed since the days of Adam.

So soon as the grand review is over, report says we are to go into winter-quarters. I hope my father's station will be in the neighbourhood of Mildmay-Hall: if not, Lydia and I must change characters. I must attend him, and she must *soothe* Mrs. Mildmay in my absence. You may smile, but I am satisfied she would regret the loss of my company.

You think, I suppose, Melvin has his share in my martial resolution. Think so still, and be deceiv'd. — No, madam; it is for Melvin to follow my lead. I am not yet so unfortunate a damsel as to be jostled on the wrong side of the question. When I am the man's wife, it is possible I may become a part of his baggage; but at present I am both his and your humble servant — at a distance.

My father — You would be delighted to see how happy Lydia's marriage has made him. — Well: who shall pretend to read the page of Futurity? If I had had millions to sport with, they would all have gone on the lay of my being first disposed

disposed of ; but the poverty of her swain, instead of proving, according to the customs of the world, a bar to their union, was the very circumstance that promoted it. Yet, to see what different effects flow from the same cause ! Ferdinand's being poor is his disqualification. I hate riddles, and therefore leave this in the hands of Time ; only wishing the unravelling may be propitious.

BUT where is the congratulatory letter I expected, I demanded ? Am I to spin out my poor brains for your amusement ? or, what is to the full as laborious a task, dress up every little tale of woe or felicity into an absolute history, and receive not even the reward of fair words ? Neither the plea of indolence, or of business, will on this occasion be admitted : so take up your pen, and do your duty like a good girl. Curiosity may, however, be a more powerful incentive with you than the desire of obliging. Then mark me ! This is the last epistle, either interesting or *dega-gée*, historical or chit-chat, you shall have from me, unless you condescend to write me a longish, handsomeish, pleasantish letter, as a general answer to, and general congratulation of,

Your

ELLA RIVERS.

## LETTER IX.

WRITING, my dear Ella, is your talent, your delight; and a variety of subjects court your pen. You choose and refuse as humour dictates, and I receive with gratitude whatever has the good-fortune to engage your attention. But is it in character for my fair friend so abundantly to feel her superiority, and extort a letter from the barren soil I inhabit, merely as a foil to her elegant performances?—Be it so, then; but as you know my heart, you can much better conceive than I can express, the joy I feel on the change in Lydia's fate. — Poor, sweet girl! the useless tears she has shed! But they are all done away; —and if your new brother is the youth you describe him, she will be one of the happiest wives in his Majesty's dominions.

My father came home last night in a pensive state of mind. I did not at first distinguish it from dissatisfaction. He said, “ he had heard Rivers “ was such a fool as to slight all the overtures “ Mrs. Mildmay made him. He was a Stoic. — “ such a fortune might have charms for him, if “ the woman had been a dowdy; which was so “ far, however, from being the case, that he “ did not believe there was a more perfect crea- “ ture on earth.”

I MADE no reply.

“ Do you think his principles of honour are “ so rigid, as not to marry her merely because “ all the wealth is on her side?”

“ I VERILY

"I VERILY believe it."

"INDEED!"

"INDEED."

He paused again.

"I CANNOT account for his behaviour that way, neither."

"SIR!" said I, wishing to come at the knowledge of what was passing in his mind.

"THE boy," continued he, "would have told tales, however secret the father.—No, no; they have both treated me ill, and I will despise them."

"DEAR SIR," said I, "if I might but speak without offending you."

"SPEAK, and fear not."

WE were interrupted, Ella, in this very critical, this seemingly most propitious moment, by the arrival of the Parson of the parish.

THE Back-gammon tables were called for, and I was forced to retire.—Pity my weakness; for I have wept my supposed disappointment for these two hours. All uncertain as it is, what might have been the consequence of the explanation I was resolved to give him!

ON revolving the whole matter I begin, however, to be of opinion, that a personal discussion is not so eligible as a literary one. He might brow beat me from my purpose; or, what is worse, terrify me into a misrepresentation of the interesting facts I was about to relate. On some occasions the omission, nay, the transposition, of a single word is fatal. I should never have the courage to proceed, if he betrayed either displeasure or impatience!



I MUST condemn Mr. Rivers's punctilios, let them result from whatever honourable motives. Melvin has his consent, though the ceremony is delayed. I have no doubt, be assured, of your swain's constancy; but when once people are come to a proper understanding on certain subjects, and have no impediments in the way, I would not retard the conclusion, if I was the wise ones. — You are a flattering girl! Let Melvin, however, look to it! — But should you play him a slippery trick, I should place your levity solely to your father's account, with his far-fetched decorums! — The Camp air, my dear, has not *softened* him!

FERDINAND desires to see my letters! — Poor Ferdinand! They would only discredit me in your good opinion. — I have not let concealment, with Shakespear's beautifully delicate maiden, prey on my damask cheek. — I blush, Ella, at the recollection of what I have written; yet must flatter myself Ferdinand knows my turn of mind too well, to put a wrong construction on my tenderest epithets. I have called him my brother, friend! — And has he not been both to me? the companion of my pleasant, the sharer of my serious hours? To him I owe every mental accomplishment I possess; my taste for the sublime; my admiration of the simplicity of Nature, and Nature's production; my acquaintance with moral, with entertaining, with liberal authors; my common sense in all the articles of private conduct. — But hasten to quit a subject on which I always lose myself, and shall only repeat, that my tenderest friendship and sympathy await you all. — You cannot communicate a joy I shall not feel, or touch a string of sorrow without wounding my sensibility.

If Mrs. Wilson should not deem writing to a young friend incompatible with the dignity of a wife, I shall be happy to receive a line from her sweet self to make me new o'er, as Shakespear phrases it, what I am already, a Daughter of Felicity on her account. Her language is all-gentle, generous, soft; but yours variegated by the various sensations that rapidly seize, and rapidly pass over your mind. — You are, nevertheless, a very tolerable girl, and

I am,

With much affection, &c.

C. FLETCHER.

LET

## LETTER X.

So cold, so chilling cold!

**TOLERABLE!**—A very pretty kind of a lukewarm phrase that! —Tolerable! quotha.—I wish, however, my dear madam, I could return the compliment; but the truth is, you are very intolerable; and take notice, I shall henceforth write much rather to please myself, than an unthankful, peevish, super-refined damsel, who does not know what she would be at; is too squeamish to answer a plain question; and, instead of Yes or no No, leads the imagination a dance through all the mazes and meanders of false delicacy, leaving your own ingenuity to be your only clue to extricate you therefrom. You may make a very eligible and exemplary wife, with all this *salalishness* about you; but, take my word for it, you are a very dull correspondent; and to Mrs. Wilson I refer you for every information in future.

My clerical admirer fancies he gains ground in my affections; and has so fine a hard head of his own, or rather is so intoxicated with self-love, that he suspects not he has a rival. He paces it on his little poney by my side, or rolls languishingly in a corner of my benefactress's coach, when admitted to that honour; sings *at me*; flatters my foibles, my defects; for if you would believe him, I am the whole and sole objects of his thoughts, his wishes, and his cares. He was a laughable creature at first, but is become downright troublesome.

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LORD BRAZEN has *done himself the honour* to write to me. Hearts, darts, and all the sweet jingling of sweet words is contained in his epistle! — He hears he has competitors.

'Tis Heaven's own fault that made me like the sun,  
The reasonable worship of mankind.

All that he is prepared for: but woe be on his head who wins the prize from him! — Heaven, earth, seas and mountains shall be roused in his cause, to punish, to crush his arrogance. — Mr. Rivers is, however, intreated in *filken* terms to watch over his life, his love; — and thus I hope you will learn to subscribe to my consequence.

WILSON is a fine-spirited fellow. He wants my father to buy a Majority, and, patriarch-like, would pledge himself to serve seven years for the *Rachel* he has obtained; — in plain English, would stand debtor to Mrs. Mildmay for the money, to be paid by instalments. — “Will you, Sir, not give a young man some encouragement? — I accepted my life at *your* hands unconditionally; I ask you only to oblige me, by using a few pounds of mine. Surely, if you can think the latter an obligation, you treble the weight you have laid on my poor shoulders, exclusive of your last great gift, your Lydia. — Would you, could you, Sir, bestow her on a young fellow you disdain to receive an *acknowledgement* from, for all your kindness?”

My father insists upon it, that it is more honourable for him to close his military life as a subaltern, than *buy* himself into dignity. — “When commissions,” said he, “are set up to sale, the man who has most money will ever be considered



“sidered to have the most merit; let the guilty,  
 “therefore, *blush*—I will never receive promo-  
 “tion, but at the hands of my Sovereign, as a  
 “noon-day compensation for the toils I have suf-  
 “tained in his service.”

MRS. MILD MAY applauds this reasoning: but to prove how very ready she is to trust the young steward with her property, she says, he may command the loan of a thousand guineas, whenever he can prevail on Ferdinand to purchase.—“Fer-  
 “dinand shall not,” she says, “wait the slow  
 “reward of virtue, but conform to the custom  
 “of the times, and *purchase* his way to a gene-  
 “ralship.”

HERE Ferdinand’s modesty puts in his caveat:—“He hopes to be Mrs. Mildmay’s Chaplain yet before he dies; the Field has not the charms for him, it has for many young men; and it would be his highest ambition to enjoy a comfortable Living.”

“GOD and Nature,” said this dear woman, “implants an election in our hearts, that it is  
 “tyranny, it is impiety, to resist; and since he  
 “will not be a General, he shall be a Bishop.”

MY father replied in the language of Sancho Pancha, “that he much feared, if Heaven was  
 “to rain mitres, whether any one of them would  
 “fit Ferdinand’s head.”

“THEN I beg,” said I, “I may recommend  
 “my clerical adorer to your patronage, madam;  
 “for lawn sleeves, I am persuaded, are included  
 “in his Pater Noster, as well as they constitute  
 “a part of his Litany—his *We beseech thee*, &c.”

MY father called me a mad girl, and bid me not be prophane.—“It is so difficult, my dear,” said he, “to draw the line on some subjects, and  
 “separate the *man* from the *text*, that we should  
 “be

be cautious, lest, whilst we only mean to ridicule the one, we should scandalize the other."

I FELT the justice of the rebuke, and made him an acknowledging bow.

So warm and boisterous a firing is kept up since our expectation of the Sovereign, that my poor ears cannot reconcile themselves to softer sounds than the roaring of guns, and the clashing of swords; and I more than ever exclaim,

Oh what a charming thing's a Battle!

For do but think, how glorious, how delightful it must be, to mow down whole files of brave fellows at a stroke!—Limbs scattering, brains flying!—Let me then repeat the above quoted line,

Oh what a charming thing's a Battle!

My father, it seems, on his first starting in life, formed a friendship of as glowing and illustrious a kind, as ever was recorded in any annals—no insult to the names of the Pylades' and Orestes' who may have existed since the Flood.

THEY both bore arms under the command of General Wolf, of immortal memory, and both made the campaign with him, in which that Hero fell. Heaven wipe the subsequent dishonour from the British page! say I, in the true spirit of female patriotism.

In the heat of battle, every Commander, from the halbert to the truncheon, has business enough on his hands, if they have but judgment enough to execute it. The word was given for my father's corps to advance. He did advance, and obeyed the martial *fist* in its utmost latitude, though

though he beheld his beloved friend fall, and a party push forward, who, he was satisfied must trample him to death, if his wounds were not mortal.—He shuddered—the big tear stole down his manly cheek: his own life he would have freely offered up in the attempt to save his friend; but he must have done more.—The very effort would have thrown his corps, if not the whole wing he belonged to, into confusion. All the brave fellows he beheld must perhaps have been lost—his honour too!—He tore himself from the spot, and left him, alas! to perish in the general carnage.

THE battle over, duty gave place to friendship. His wound in this engagement was a slight one. Having yielded to the positive injunctions of his captain to have it dressed, he flew back to the field, to seek out his friend amongst the many dead bodies. The uniform the same made his search a difficult one, until a ring with a picture in it, familiar to his sight, pointed him out to him.—Can I finish the drawing?—He was wounded in three places, but had suffered more by being trod under foot, than by the cannon's mouth. One of his fine eyes was perished; the other languished in its socket.—The well-known voice of Rivers gave his soul a momentary sensation of pleasure; but he had come too late, except to let him have the felicity of expiring in his arms.—He died, madam, and my father returned to his tent in the utmost disconsolation, having first committed the care of the body to a faithful drummer, who pledged himself to defend it from outrage, and convey it to the first town for decent interment, at my father's expence.

THIS sad scene, together with the cutting-off of his adored commander, Wolf, should, one would suppose, have given my father a disrelish for the martial

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martial profession.—But no: he remembered the innumerable accidents that attend humanity. Had his friend been a *sportsman*, his horse might have thrown him; an *alderman*, his luxuries might have shortened his days; a *courtier*, burnt champagne might have been his bane; a ——— But I shall enumerate no more of his reflections; only tell you, that he argued down his regrets into resignation, and resolved the chance of war into the common chance of existence: so forming new friendships, prepared new wounds for his sensibility; and from choice, as well as a nice regard for man's opinion, has persevered in his first election, and will live and die, I verily believe a soldier.

If I had a taste for melancholy stories, how rapidly could I let them fall from my pen! But melancholy stories are the bane of vivacity, and vivacity is the vital of my composition, and shall be cherished by me as such.

SOMETIMES, indeed, when Melvin's features are beaming with benevolence, of which he possesses a plentiful portion, I own I cannot confine the frightful wanderings of my imagination: yet be of good cheer; we shall have no bloody noses this campaign; and as a peace is the general object with France, America, and England, from their ebbing finances, shattered trade, and endangered possessions, it is a strong article of my Christian faith, that a peace will be patched up before the return of the season for taking the field. And admitting that the *patch-work* cannot hold together, Ferdinand will, nevertheless, be enabled to make an honourable retreat; and having resumed the clerical character, will have bid a final adieu to every hostile manœuvre and hostile pretension.

I CONGRATULATE you on your agreeable prospect, and particularly on the *relaxation* of your



your father's wrath towards my poor harmless family. May the fit of lenity, contrition, or by what other name you choose to distinguish it, increase upon him until it attains a happy crisis!

FERDINAND paid me a visit at my toilette this morning, and looked so much in the Abelard style, so sweetly distressed, and so tenderly sensitive, I could not forbear indulging him, unasked, with a sight of your last letter; — the worst, by the bye, you ever wrote me: for it is flimsy, linsy-woolsey — neither rhyme nor reason; and yet a somewhat of both. You can be nervous and pathetic, if you please; but this was not your hour of inspiration.

He nevertheless behaved in such a manner, that had I been the next heir to a large fortune, I would have taken out a statute of lunacy against him. He kissed the dear, dear name; and hung on each tender word, syllable by syllable. It was all enchantment, infatuation, folly; and I at length gazed upon him a few moments, then laughing from my *free lungs* roused him into recollection. He is my brother, madam, and I have a right to treat him with what familiarity I please. — As your lover, you may exalt him into a divinity, if you please; and then fall down and worship the molten calf you have set up. But pardon me; you must not hope to lead me astray in the paths of idolatry. I know him weak, frail, doating; — he is, however, your own *true lover*, and you will paint him in what colourings shall seem best in your sight; and foul befall the woman that could attempt to obscure the painted cloud that beautifies your days!

WILSON has already attained such a height in Mrs. Mildmay's esteem, that I fear the poor fellow's head should grow giddy. It is not every one

who can look down from an eminence with a steady eye and a sure footing. He has, according to her account, the best understanding, and the best heart in the world; is her *Cicisbeo* on all occasions.—“We shall hear what Mr. Wilson says to it.—We will appeal to a clearer judgment than our own.—Mr. Wilson will be so good as to guide us.”—I, however, have none of this far-fetched humility, but take upon me to set him right when I think him wrong, with a Pray, good sir, don’t suppose yourself infallible! Mrs. Mildmay is as partial to you as she is to me; therefore learn to make a proper use of her kindness. By telling you what you are *not*, she instructs you what you *ought* to be; and your own conscience must be your mirror, as it is your sister’s to set your mind by, and discover to you your own deficiencies.—To mean well, is a great step towards doing well:—but though it may be impossible for my weak sex to accomplish so great a work as perfection of character, it would be a high reflection on you, a Lord of the creation, to be found stopping short of less than perfect.”

He rallies me with much pleasantry on these occasions; begs me, like the crab’s daughter in the fable, to shew the way, and promises to follow.

But wherefore do I dwell so long on such a trifling subject?—He is very well, for a sister’s husband; and as such I consider him; but I must choose a nobler theme for the exercise of my fine talents, or I should ill deserve the name of

Your friend, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T-

## LETTER XL

I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought

MRS. MILD MAY has written a sweet, sensible, explanatory epistle to Lord Brazen; setting forth my reasons for loving the insinuating Melvin, together with her reasons for espousing his interest, and intreating him not to excite my father to an opposition that would unavailingly interrupt the friendship and the filial peace at present subsisting amongst us; and wishing him a more suitable bride.

How it will work on his fine or his rough feelings, I know not; but if I read him right, he will not sit down so well satisfied with what he may conceive an *indignity*, as is necessary to our repose: yet let him struggle as he may, it will only pull the *knot* of his mortification tighter.—We are incapable of being shaken in our resolves, and can distinguish the difference between a diamond and a *Scotch pebble*.—A lucky hit That!—for you must observe, the Brazens are most of them of Scottish extraction.

THIS sleek Chaplain, my adorer, should my Lord take it in his head he is the man I have chosen, may perhaps be brought to smart for his presumption.—Heaven pardon me! but I will flirt it a little with him, in order to give some colour to such a suspicion; for I know Melvin to have a “soul made of fire,” your Americans and Africans being almost equally Children of the Sun; and I should tremble for the consequence, if he was to become the mark of Lord Brazen’s resentment.

W<sup>h</sup> *beauties* have a sad time of it, my dear! The men are naturally hot-headed, and given to broils; they will fight; and as Addison says, so I believe there are few quarrels without a woman in them.—And for the very reason he assigns too, —That nothing else is worth quarreling about. —Should this fatal face of mine, however, draw any fellow of merit into a scrape, I should be seriously punished for the innocent gaiety of my heart; and it will be exactly the same thing, whether I am a dowdy or an Helen, if your masculine wretches choose to constitute me a bone of contention.—But I fly this subject, or I should soon be as dull as a passing bell.

W<sup>ELL</sup>, and how does Sir Ferdinand find himself?—Is his fit of compunction over, for the sins he has committed against my family?—or does he hold himself ready to beg pardon when opportunity shall offer.

I HAVE a question to ask you.—You cannot doubt my friendship, you must not doubt my resolution; for am I not the daughter of a soldier?—Do you imagine it might not be a forwarding of the wish of your heart respecting Ferdinand, if I was to smile on this Lord?—*Lady Brazen!* Would not such a sound, think you, tickle the old Baronet's ears?—If so, you may command me. But there is no time to be lost: his offended dignity may be appeased, but it must be appeased on the instant.—Speak then to this point by the return of post, or—for ever after be silent.

I HAVE seen the old waistcoat. On my word a notable legacy!—It is green sattin lined with green silk, and *bequilted* at a violent rate.—I thought the hot countries would not admit of such heavy garments. Wilson, indeed, affirms, that it is light as taffeta, and that the heaviness is only in



In the eye: but all he says does not pass with me for gospel. I hope you will have ocular demonstration of his absurdity in this particular, in less than seven years distance from the present period.

Frailty, thy name is Woman. —

MRS. LISIMORE has so effectually buried one husband, that she is already casting about for another. My benefactress was petrified at the news; but as she lets every one be happy their own way, the lady will receive her good leave to play the fool and marry, since such is her heart's desire.

I SAY not a word, however, in condemnation of second marriages. We all have our private opinions in these matters. The affections, Madam, cannot be locked up by an event that restores them to freedom—as one may say. There is no companionableness in the grave; and such is the censorious temper of the world, that you cannot enjoy the conversation of a male on no other terms than *honourable*, unscandalized. I have been in contemplation, therefore, to raise a report, by way of a *quickener* to the nuptials I am anxious should take place; and by persuading a worthy couple the Camp whisper is, that they ought to be man and wife, render them so in reality.

THERE is no living on martial ground without learning to act the engineer on occasion—My mine shall be dexterously planned, the combustibles judiciously disposed, and I will have an especial eye to my own safety. Mildmay Hall is so sweet a place, that methinks, as Swift says,

————— 'T would sound more clever,  
To him, (meaning my father) and to his heirs, for ever

meaning myself, and Ferdinand, and Lydia;  
 and———Fill up the space to your own fancy:  
 you are heartily welcome, I can assure you, ma-  
 dam.

YOUR father hears tales of my father! I should  
 be glad to know through what channel;—does  
 the Public then *join names together*, which *Fate*,  
*perhaps will ever keep asunder*—Rivers and  
 Mildmay?—'Tis a conjunction, I grant you, de-  
 sirously to be wished; but I fear they will be found  
 retrograde planets, and by an invisible attraction,  
 be ever more on the point of uniting, but still  
 pursue a different course.

CAPT. JAMES BRAZEN is, it seems, a dis-  
 tant relation of my Lord's; and being the medi-  
 um of his condescending remembrance of us, is  
 swept into our acquaintance. The Parson and he  
 debate on law, on physick, on divinity; on each  
 of which subjects, like the fiddlers in Nero's time,  
 he subscribes to his patron's superiority: for eve-  
 n a great man may become, if he is not already, a  
 patron; and he is armed at all points in the cause  
 of self-interest.

SOMETIMES think, that, spaniel-like, he is  
 only doing his master's bidding, in the court  
 he pays to your humble servant; and that instead  
 of an admirer, I shall find him a spy on my con-  
 duct. I clearly recollect, that our acquaintance  
 commenced immediately on Lord Brazen's depar-  
 ture. If so, I shall be counterworked with a wit-  
 ness in all my little schemes.

How harmless do we females decide our con-  
 versies! if scolding fails, we only pull caps,  
 and fall foul on each other's reputations, untie the  
 budget of secrets, and lay open the foibles of our  
 bosom-friends, to the knowledge, inspection,  
 and judgment of the whole circle of our intimates:

the

the males force their opponents into fearful combats, and forgetful

What dangers do environ

The men who meddle with cold iron,

will accept of no satisfaction, but such as the sword can give. Hence the offender often triumphs over the offended—the amiable, the good.—But we will talk no more of it.

WE dined yesterday at the Lodge with Mr. and Mrs. Willson. It was always a delightful spot; but Lydia has much improved it by her taste for flowers, and her unexampled neatness. I thought her a good girl, but never suspected her of the domestic talents she displays. She loves and honours her husband as a wife ought to love and honour him, but can remember that there are hours enough in the twenty-four to *bedear* him, without surfeiting the ears of her company with such *sugar-plum* epithets. I do not, indeed, say, there is any rule without an exception; but in nineteen cases out of twenty, you will find the assertion hold good, that she who labours to exhibit her conjugal tenderness, is either a hypocrite, or a shrew at heart, and makes the poor man pay in private for all the homage he receives in public. No very comfortable compromise, in my sense of things! But I will adopt a quite opposite conduct, and Melvin shall applaud my wisdom and my delicacy, or he is no husband for me. I shall take care to have a saving clause, a mental reservation, when I make my matrimonial vow that shall be a salvo for my conscience, if I break it as to the article of reverence, on discovering I have been imposed upon. Melvin will lead me to church with all the Loves and Graces in his train: he will profess himself my

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eternal debtor; that his life shall be a succession of gratitude, of submission to my sovereign will. Now I only ask you, if it would not be both just and reasonable, on his changing, for me to change also; and as he grows into the husband in roughness, in tyranny, in dishumour, for me to dwindle into the wife in petulance, in opposition, in carelessness? Give your worst of thoughts, your worst of words on the subject; I herewith send you the necessary dispensation: but I will deal so far candidly with you as to tell you, that my resolves will remain the same, let your sentiments be for or against them—Find me such another open-dealing damsel, if you can.

I am, as usual,

Your

ELLA RIVERS.



## LETTER XII.

**W**ILSON so parades it about Mr. Rivers—is so dutiful, and so respectful, and so attentive, that we, his natural offspring, appear as *nothings* in the comparison.—Then, again, Mr. Rivers is so happy, and so blessed, and so thankful, to Providence, for giving him such a son, that poor Ferdinand's merits are lost in the blaze of his brother-in-law's deservings.

LYDIA sees all this with delighted eyes. If she loved him formerly for being a pretty fellow, she now loves him for being a good one.—“He has  
“so winning a way with him, there is no resisting  
“him; and, except a preference we must re-  
“joice in, has an equal affection for us all.”

WELL said, Lydia!—Sing forth your husband's praises, if it shall so please you; but allow me to dissent from your super-refined notions. It is art, downright, dexterous, insidious art, that carries him the lengths he goes in my father's favour;—and you are a tame animal of a wife to be satisfied with only the second place in his heart: your father, child, evidently possesses the first. Yet let me do the fellow justice: he has left some very decent compliments to be presented by me to my fair friend, and hopes there is an hour in store, when he shall pay them personally. Credulous simpleton!—But he has trod fairy ground ever since he arrived amongst us; nor can I wish to have him disenchanted.

ANNETTE and her Lubin are wedded. She visits, but will no more take up her residence

in Camp, but he looks after the dairy,—a kind of lodge in the midst of the park,—where all our treasures in the milk, cheese and butter way are deposited, and is the most docile and most grateful of beings; and, as I have told you, so soon as the wars are over, Lubin is to get his discharge, and either occupy his peaceable trade of a shoemaker, or have some rural appointment at the Hall.

With such a companion to tend a few sheep.

would, I verily believe, be the height of Annette's ambition.

WHAT a contrasted life mine is!—At Mildmay Hall the primitive times seemed revived!—Bleating flocks and lowing herds increase the beauty of the scene;—all is innocence and sweet simplicity.—Mrs. Mildmay is the queen, the parent of the scene.—She is beheld, she is considered, as the second Providence of her attendants;

Their law her eye, their oracle her tongue;

and is the heart-felt joy of all her acquaintance.

At the Camp all is bustle and confusion.—The Bobadils strut, the Drawcanfirs stafe, and the Fribbles trip.—Hoarse sounds of every kind assail the ear;—the thunder of the artillery, the crackling of the carbines, the crowding of the spectators, with their marvelings, their wranglings, and their disgusts;—there is no possessing one's own mind a moment, or asking yourself one cool, one serious question.

APROPÓS of Camp! The little boy I mentioned to you, whose mother lay in of twins, is now

K 2 at

school at Mrs. Mildmay's expence. She has, moreover, bespoke a Christ's Hospital presentation for him, so soon as he attains the appointed age for admission; and I should not wonder, he is so promising in every respect, if he should become a great man.

OLD people and children are the favourite objects with Mrs. Mildmay; the helplessness of the one, and the unprotected state of the other, pleading irresistibly to such a mind as hers, for all that humanity and beneficence can do to soften the miseries, and obviate the dangers of those particular characters. — I fancy the Author of a book intitled *Millennium-Hall*, borrowed his best thoughts from this best of women, and concealed under his fictions the wonders of her goodness. — She is, my dear madam, wholly unostentatious, and seeks neither fame or reward beyond her own consciousness of having, as she phrases it, performed her duty. — The man of Ross, so sweetly sung by Mr. Pope, is her counter-part; though she is angry if you tell her so.

SHE hates Parson Sleek as much as I do, from believing he hides the Voluptuary and the Libertine behind his sacred function; and that, though he honours the Deity with his lips, his heart is far from him. She is a woman of penetration, and cannot be deceived by appearances. — The postman is coming up the avenue — A letter for me I hope! — I despair, — I hope again; for I am requested by Mrs. Mildmay to attend her.

I AM shocked, I am alarmed beyond measure — Lord Brazon is the very Lord Brazen I apprehended we should find him. — He resents in the

most approbrious terms (though addressing a lady) the affront he has met with; — the injustice, the scorn, the ridicule; — and boldly adds, that a day of chastisement will come for those who deserve it; when they shall be drawn from their covert into noon day contempt, and be scourged for their ill-manners to a man of fashion, and every way their superior.

MRS. MILDMAJ laments we did not temporize longer: but I rather wish we had dealt ingenuously by him in the first instance! The affair would have been over and past; whereas it now wears a threatening aspect. — Melvin, Ferdinand, my father — I fear for each, for all of them: they are my vulnerable part, and Heaven preserve it from a wound!

BUT you shall read the right honourable

MADAM,

"I AM sorry to find a lady of fortune and fashion capable of low cunning and base hypocrisy. — When at Coxheath Camp, who such a favourite with you as Lord Brazen? And you must pardon Lord Brazen, if he observes, your favour in that quarter was no dishonour to your taste, your understanding, or your character."

"In the fullest confidence of your friendship and approbation, Lord Brazen changed his situation. — His Majority drew him to Warley-Common; but his heart remained at Mildmay-Hall. He toasted the lady of his wishes on all occasions, though the daughter of a subaltern; and was wilfully blind to overtures of the most flattering species, for her sake."



“ ALL his hopes are however, blasted! He has, it seems, been sported with: but by all that is gracious, the jest shall be keenly turned on his mean adversaries. He can pull a little rascal by the nose without losing his temper, and whip a school-boy into better manners, without falling from his own dignity.

“ MRS. MILD MAY may remember, that the West Indies is more eminent for wealth, than high blood:—Planters and lords are not the growth of the same soil.—Money, indeed, is an excellent *fuller's earth*, but will not wash out a blotch in a family-escutcheon, though it may confound distinction, in the opinion of the vulgar.—By heaven, Lord Brazen will repay scorn with scorn! The yellow clay is apparent in Mrs. Mildmay's conduct, bespeaks her origin, and proves the parent-stock from whence she sprung.—But perhaps there may be as brave and as illustrious persons in the world as her minion, her idol, her doating-piece.—It is easy to see by a little, what a great deal means.—She is welcome to bestow her person on whom she pleases:—but she will be prudent enough to caution her boys not to be have ill to their betters.

“ If Mr. Rivers had the spirit of a mouse, he would assume the reigns, and be master of his own family.—But, perhaps, his *tameness* is the key to Mrs. Mildmay's treasury; and it may be convenient for a needy man to have hundreds at command.—He shall be known, however, for what he is;—a male-content—a reviler of his sovereign—a bold, an aspiring, a haughty fellow, who looks with a jaundiced eye on every advancement a person of merit rises to.

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“As for the young lady, she is a flirt—a painted doll—a pert insignificant girl—lifted out of herself by the folly of a god-mother, who will let her tumble into the dirt, to prove her tenderness; and who might once, but never must hope for such a thing again, have made her a lady, and the wife of an insulted, a generous, an enamoured man of fashion, who can only subscribe himself her astonished and *satisfied*

“Humble servant,

“BRAZEN.”

THERE'S a Lord for you! This letter must, however, be cautiously kept from Mr. Rivers' eye, or perhaps the tables would be turned, and repentance be his Lordship's portion.

WHAT a noise the affair would make, if it was to get abroad!—And then these young heads would, I fear, be unable to contain themselves!—My God! how little did I foresee my Camp expedition would end in duelling—in bloodshed!—But these vain-boasters are often miserable doers: There is the coward in every word that has fallen from his pen.—The thought revives me!—If he was on the spot, he durst not, I dare answer for it, so much as open his mouth.—I will drink deep of this cordial, and put my trust in Providence, who guards the good, punishes the evil, and sets up certain characters for marks of divine displeasure, of divine vengeance.

Oh how I could now sigh for the happy shades of Somersetshire! the peaceful, the tranquil, the retired scene!—But it will not be; and I must for once subscribe myself

Your unhappy

ELLA RIVERS.

### LETTER XIII.

**A**YE, now, now I begin to feel!—Ferdinand, with a face as pale as ashes, has been here to look for Melvin—Melvin spent the evening yesterday at a tavern, and Captain James Brazen was one of the party.

My Lord's name was mentioned.—His relation extolled him to the skies;—the most generous of men, the best-bred, the best-made, the finest gentleman in the kingdom!—Melvin smiled sarcastically.

“Do you smile at me, Sir?” was the word.

“Not I, Sir,” said Melvin; “but I smile.”

“You smile insolently, Sir!”

“You lose your temper, Sir,” said Melvin; “and it must be pretty plain to the company!”

“how-

"however well-bred your noble relation may be, you are not his relation in that particular."

"You shall answer this, Sir," said Brazen.

"At any time you please," replied Melvin, "when we are alone. Our friends would of course interpose, if we proceeded farther before them."

"A GOOD excuse!"

"I wish to be excused at this conjuncture, for I cannot brook even the appearance of cowardice."

"COWARDICE!"

"YES, cowardice; for I wear not my daggers in my mouth.—Have we done, Sir?"

"GIVE me the example; and if it is a discreet one," said Captain Brazen, "I will condescend to follow it."

No more passed in the tavern.—Early in the morning, Ferdinand, having received this account, repaired to Melvin's tent.—He was abroad—at exercise—the servant could not tell.

"How was he dressed?"

"In his regimental frock."

"DID he go out on foot or on horseback?"

"He had his horse, and might possibly be gone to Mildmay-Hall."

"O IMPOSSIBLE!" said my brother: he never left the Camp before without telling me the wherefore.—But recollecting himself, he added, lest the fellow should spread the alarm, "I fancy I shall be able to find him, though he has given me the slip."

To Mildmay-Hall he came; and, as his mind foretold, no Melvin was there. I fairly played the blubbering girl; imputed every evil consequence to my indiscretion; and was so unguarded, that if Mrs. Mildmay had not absolutely stopped



my mouth, though it was the last thing I wished should reach his knowledge, I should have blabbed about the letter—Brazen's letter.

"I PROTEST," said Mrs. Mildmay, there  
 "never was such a couple upon earth—riding  
 "forth to meet grievances, and feeding each  
 "other's whims! I beg I may hear no more of it.  
 "The young man has some affair of gallantry,  
 "perhaps, upon his hands; and as matters stand,  
 "the brother is as unfit a confidant as the sister.  
 "You will find him returning with that face of  
 "fair seeming he carries about with him, and so  
 "will give him credit for whatever tale he tells  
 "you. But beware of counterfeits, say I, as  
 "well as the good-natured Quacks in our news-  
 "papers."

FERDINAND shook his head, and I kissed her hand, to thank her for the goodness of her intention; but my heart was too full to speak; and my brother hurried away for better intelligence.

WHAT will become of me?—Should our conjectures prove well-founded!—Alas! he may by this time be beyond our care—dead!—a sacrifice to my false politics, my levity!—My good, good girl, never depart from the line you have hitherto pursued! Your own reproaches will be the bitterest torments you can incur!—No, let fate or fortune do its worst, secure your own breast from the arrows of self-condemnation.

Twelve o'clock.

No tidings either of Melvin or my brother!  
 —Do you not pity me?—I am the wreck of such  
 happiness

happiness as few mortals are permitted to taste ; but it is in mercy denied them. — All good and evil, the wise ones tell us, is from comparison ; softened or aggravated, as the scale preponderates to This or That. — Then what a wretch must I be, — tumbled from such an eminence ! — Ah me ! Resignation, as Sciolto says of death,

*Is not the Stoic's Lesson learn'd by rote.*

Now is your turn to triumph ! — Your monitor is lost — lost to every dictate of patience — of endurance — of —

BUT he is come ! — I see him riding up to the house ! — Don't shew this letter to any one, I conjure you ! — I will deny it all. — Concern'd about Melvin ! — A likely story truly ! — I must, however, hear what he has to say, if it is only for your information. — I come, I come !

THEY have met ! they have fought ! — I tremble whilst I write — but no mischief has ensued ; Captain Brazen's eagerness giving Melvin such advantage over him, that he soon disarmed him, gave him his life and *bade him mend it*. He is a generous conqueror ; but the rencounter will, I fear, neither do him, nor me, nor my poor father, credit. — I would give millions it had never happened !

MRS. MILD MAY is convinced, from Melvin's representation, that a man of honour could not do otherwise than he has done. — “ Insulted in public company — nay, insulted for his command of temper — he must chastise the presuming spark in his own defence. He will now be secure from insolent attacks. — It is necessary to let it be understood a man has *courage*, as he is *chast* and then only, placed above the bravings of cowardice.”

"cowardice."—And thus did this good woman endeavour to reconcile me to an action I know her heart abhors; for I have heard her say, on former occasions, there was only a hair's-breadth distinction between the duellist and the assassin.

MELVIN would not stay dinner, lest the affair should get air and reach my father's knowledge, when he was not on the spot to give him due impressions of his conduct. He was, moreover, anxious to relieve Ferdinand's bosom from apprehensions for his safety; he therefore left us, methought, abruptly—at best hastily.

CAPTAIN JAMES BRAZEN was somewhat chagrined, when he found Melvin would construe his taunts into a challenge.

"You shall not have it in your power," said he, "to set me down for a dealer in excuses, though I can conform to the necessities, and observe the proprieties of certain situations: will you, therefore, attend me, Sir, beyond the boundaries of our encampment, where we can meet without witnesses, and settle our dispute without interruption?"

"It would do no harm," Captain James said, "to have a friend with them, in case of accidents."

VERY well, Sir," replied Melvin; "if you have a friend you can wish to trouble on such an occasion, be it so, on your part:—I have my reasons for choosing to come alone."

MELVIN repaired immediately to the destined place, and waited so long for the Captain, that he began to conclude he had contrived to be put under an arrest.—He was convinced he had wronged him; for, lo! he approached, but evidently approached reluctantly.

THE

THE ground was measured out, and the gentlemen (as all gentlemen, it seems, do, before they try to cut each other's throats) shook hands—fled off to the right and left—and put themselves into attitude.

MELVIN presently perceived what a weak adversary he had to encounter with: he therefore stood only on his defence, to parry his injudicious thrusts; which he mistaking for lack of courage, intending to make a desperate push, first lost his footing, then his sword, and found his life in the hands of a man he had grossly provoked.

His features agonized; he even descended to the meanness of begging quarter, before Melvin could tell him he had nothing to fear.—“And now,” said Melvin, restoring him his sword, “I presume we have no quarrel!”

CAPTAIN JAMES BRAZEN, scarcely knowing what he did, asked him ten thousand and ten thousand pardons, and each party went about his business.

I WILL not trust myself to reverse the prospect. He would have butchered poor Melvin, if it had been in his power. It was a meeting on unequal terms—a ruffian and a man of honour!—You see, my dear madam, I am as tender of your feelings, as I would be of my own; and never conclude my letters in the midst of a distressful story.—Melvin is safe, and I am once more

Your lively friend,

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T.



## LETTER XIV.

"Tis not in mortals to command success,  
But we'll do more—we will; my dear, deserve it.

A PRETTY sort of a business this duelling has turned out! Melvin no sooner returned to Camp, than he was put under an arrest, and will be tried by a Court-Martial. — Broke, I hope! He will not make the worse country-gentleman, for not being thought worthy to serve his Majesty. What a predicament the gentlemen of the army stand in! If they *accept* a challenge, they are superseded; if they *decline* one, they are disbanded.—What, then, is a Soldier, of all men living, required to be the same individual — Shall he, if smitten on one cheek, in the meek and lowly spirit of christianity turn the other also? It is a contradiction in terms!—A Soldier must be tenacious of his honour, his dignity; he must feel, and feel warmly, every unworthy stroke, whether of satire, of ridicule, of contempt, of insult; and if the conduct of a duellist can in any character be defensible, it is certainly in that of a Soldier, who naturally defends himself, as he would his Country, with his sword.

WE intend to pay a charitable visit to the poor prisoner this afternoon. Scandal may, perhaps, be busy, and recollect how Alexander had his Roxana and his Statira. We are prepared for all that; and wrapping ourselves up in our own integrity, shall defy the utmost shafts of malice, &c. &c. &c. I wish they may give him a disgust to a military life, by the severity, the folly, of

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their military laws; — and then will I sing O be joyful!

How this dear good woman interests herself in our cause! — “She’ll assure me, she does not know who they will arrest next; but an injudicious friend is always the worst of enemies. She will not interfere, but leave his own merit to settle the point to his entire satisfaction.”

WILSON, whose heart is made for friendship, drew his face to a most immoderate length, on hearing Melvin was in custody. — “Thank Heaven, he had quitted the military walk! — Mr. Rivers’ treatment had cured him of his enthusiasm; and he should rejoice to hear Melvin was become as *wise* as himself.”

THE gentle Lydia wept! — Weeping is her character, and fits mighty well upon her. — “It was a bad world,” she said, “and the Camp, she believed, the worst part of it. Could she but get her dear friends detached from it, she would never behold it more!” — Poor Lydia! — You know her turn of mind! — But since she is so alive on slight occasions of sorrow, what deep wounds must not her sensibility have sustained in the situations she has been cast in! — Yet don’t let me make you melancholy; for her sorrows are all done away, and she is now a most enviable being.

I WILL finish my letter when I return from Camp.

Eight o’clock, P. M.

MELVIN is still in close custody; yet you are well! — The evil may be a light one, if rightly considered.

considered ; but I am too interested a party to consider it rightly ; and therefore you must bear with a recital of my discontents.

A FINE fellow, an amiable fellow, and master of five-and-twenty thousand pounds to be held in durance—reprimanded—threatened with a public trial.

“ Well,” say you, “ and what of all that ?—”  
 “ They can but deprive him of the feather in his cap—his cockade—and how many pretty fellows are there in the world without that badge of bravery ?”

“ Now will I play the Touchstone with you !”—All this is very true.—They cannot loosen the band of affection by which our hearts are united ; they cannot touch his sacred person ; they cannot wound his honest fame.—’Tis not for cowardice he will be brought before a tribunal, but for a too nice sense of honour.

THEN, my dear madam, we will both of us be of good cheer ; for know, your Ferdinand, as well as my Melvin, is also a prisoner.

DOES your cheek turn pale ?—Does your heart revolt at the idea ?—What, tell me, is this Ferdinand more than Melvin, that he should escape the legal gripe ?—They will be tried ; they may be condemned ; but we know the worst sentence that can be passed upon them, viz. disqualifying them for being soldiers ; on which circumstance, I take it, neither your happiness or mine depends.

BUT what is Ferdinand’s crime ?—He is charged with abetting duelling ; of absenting himself from his corps without leave ; of being Melvin’s friend, and the son of poor Lieutenant Rivers. But criminal soever as all this may render him in the eye of his judges, he will be a *white* character

in your and my estimation, so long as we both shall live.

I OWN, I was a little surprized, on my arrival at Camp, to find I had lost my brother.—“ My brother is hold ! “ Impossible ! ”——I went to see him—there is a woman for you !—even before I visited poor Melvin.—He was not in such good spirits as I expected ; begged “ I would write, “ and tenderly inform you of his situation.—He “ had enemies, malicious enemies ; but he hoped “ the uprightness of his intentions would bear him “ through, and that he should once more be at liberty.”

MELVIN has less softness in his composition, so bears his reverse of fortune like a man. “ All “ the regret he feels, is for the loss of my sweet “ company ;—but he will make himself ample “ amends ;—for the moment of his enlargement, “ he will so beset Mr. Rivers for his consent, that “ he will let him marry his daughter in order to “ get rid of him.”—Poor Melvin ! what fairy dreams are his !—But they keep up his courage, and dissipate his uneasiness ; and I cannot find in my heart to throw cold water upon any hope he now entertains. They do smoothen well.—I know Mr. father looks very grave, but is profoundly silent.—Mrs. Mildmay watches his looks, and says she can therein read, that this is a much uglier business than I am aware of. — Fear makes us see double ;—and so I account for her alarms. I could, indeed, wish they were in the same prison, because, you know, friendly chat beguiles sorrow, and passes time lightly off our hands. WHAT, my dear madam, shall I now say to you ?—You have here a faithful state of the case. —I am no dissembler.—If I had anguish in my bosom, it would flow, like the ink from my pen ; but I am satisfied, however rancorous their will, their



their power is impotent; and that we shall soon have our swains at large, and more in love with us than ever, for the tender concern we took in their welfare:

IN which hope I conclude myself, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

## LETTER XV.

They jest at scars, who never felt a wound!

**T**HERE, ELLA, is quotation for your quotations!—How you came by your callosity I cannot tell; but callous you are, and a most degenerate daughter of Mr. Rivers, who never wounded the peace of any one, without wounding his own.

YOU profane the name of Love, by professing to feel it.—Melvyn, with all his merit, has never touched your heart. There is a frolicsomeness in your style, that is incompatible with friendship; for a friend in distress, leaves the sympathising bosom to testify the truth of its attachment.

FERDINAND in custody, told me as a thing of course,—a Camp occurrence!—and, what is  
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stranger still, I am expected to receive it as such ! — Ferdinand condemned to die, I suppose I must argue down my tender anguish, and remember, that other young fellows have incurred a similar sentence, who have been as dear to their mistresses, and in their estimation to the full as deserving as my *swain*; for so you can even now most wantonly call him.

LYDIA weeps — her nature droops at Nature's sufferings. She is a woman; you are an Amazon; and I renounce you, — break hands with you for ever.

Your Melvin too is a *prisoner* ! — Ah, Ella ! — Your Melvin is a man of fortune, and the weight will all fall on poor Ferdinand's head ! — Your father foresees the storm ! — Well may he then look grave ! — But you have stabbed me to the heart, — and Sir Ferdinand will soon discover the strength of mind his child has hitherto preserved.

Was I on the spot; could I know every half hour how things went on; hear of his health; see a confirmation of it in his face; then would I subscribe as gracefully to his destiny as you do; comfort myself with the assurance that they could not reach his life; and await the day of his enlargement without murmuring.

BUT I am at many, many miles distance; must abide the slow returns of the post; bear all the tortures of a too lively imagination in the intermediate time; and scarcely indulge my joy at the good news you send, lest some unfavourable gloom should obscure the fairest prospects.

THUS, this is the fruits of superabundant honour ! — Well may they say, that virtue in excess becomes vice ! — Was it not sufficient for your father to advise us, without separating us? — What indiscretions could he charge us with? —

To

To love was our misfortune; and nothing but our misconduct could make it our fault.—We did not once forget how necessary a father's voice was to sanctify our choice; we resolved to wait a happy turn in our affairs.—We must have now been happy but for his cruel interference! Yet let me not be severe. A noble mind may err; but the errors of a noble mind are respectable.—Heaven therefore soften the calamity! May the stroke fall light upon him!—and, oh! may he never look back, lest repentance, lest the bitterness of repentance, should be his portion!

WHEREVER I come, whatever I read, the Camp is the universal topic, the universal object. But those who can delight in the idea, or enjoy the view of it, have no Ferdinand, like me, in custody!

If you have the least spark of humanity yet remaining in your composition, write to me by every succeeding post, though it is only a repetition of what you have written before. I will support myself as long as I can; but you should remember I am no heroine in romance, therefore cannot be expected to pass sleepless nights and anxious days with unimpaired health. Spare yourself, then, the remorse of having shortened the life of one that is most truly

Your, &c.

CAROLINE FLETCHER.

L E T.

## LETTER XVI.

**E**L LA, my dear madam, intreats me to take up the pen, in order to assure you, that though our haughty chief seems to set his face against poor Ferdinand, he has not the power to hurt him.

AN arrest, a martial arrest, however, harsh or alarming it may sound in your, is a mere farce; a display of power without consequence. Our Chief, madam, may indulge his gloomy and austere humour;—he has authority so to do.—He can make prisoners at will; but *there* his authority ends. Every individual must be tried by a Court-Martial, and can have his sentence *only* proportioned to his crime: and if innocent, as my brother must appear, his being brought before the Court can be merely the prelude to his honourable discharge.

You know the timidity of my nature; you know my tender affection for Ferdinand; if I can behold his present situation without distress, I think you will not find it difficult to persuade yourself there is no cause whatever for terror or apprehension.

SCARCE a day passes but some one falls under the Generalissimo's displeasure. A turn of the head, a word misplaced, a foot too far advanced, or too far in the rear, are construed into disrespect, disobedience, or remissness of duty; and as despotism looses its force by being too despot, the frequency of these disgraces and these punishments



punishments render them a matter of laughter, of ridicule, of disregard: only it is hoped, that some one will have spirit enough, before the breaking-up of the campaign, to appeal to the Higher Powers, and expose the *mock tyrant* to the censure he merits.

HAVE I said sufficient to answer the desired purpose?—I will yet say more;—and affirm to you upon my honour, that was Wilson under the very predicament Ferdinand now stands, I should be perfectly composed, and wait his enlargement without a pang.

THAT I am, nevertheless, happy Mr. Wilson has bid adieu to a military life, is most undeniable. His temper is open, generous, credulous, but impatient of ill usage. He cannot lick the foot that spurns him, any more than my dear father could before him; it is therefore pretty clear what chance he would have had, after years of hard service, for promotion.

PROVIDENCE has thrown him into the employment and the situation best suited to his taste and talents: he is the instrument of benevolence, in the hands of the best of women. To point out a deserving object, is to give the highest satisfaction to Mrs. Mildmay; and to relieve such objects, — the highest gratification he can enjoy.

WAS you not, my dear madam, equally delighted and astonished at the sudden turn in my affairs?—Could you have supposed that it was possible in the nature of human events, to lift us, so instantaneously, out of our poverty? for that stroke was to the full as great, as bringing us once more together. I wish you could see him!—The most gracious signatures of humanity are traced out in his countenance; and as his heart has never

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ver been warped from its original bias, they only bear testimony to the feelings within.—He is a first-rate favourite with Mrs. Mildmay! “But no wonder,” you will perhaps say, “when she is the author and source of all our felicity!”—But his behaviour to the poor Lieutenant, and the consequential esteem the Lieutenant entertains for him, shews he is as grateful for benefits received, as he can possibly be for those he is receiving; and that he is in no degree a time-server, a courtier, or a hypocrite.

ELLA is the most extraordinary mixture of vivacity and sentiment I ever met with!—I often envy her; for whatever superior reputation I may possess for tenderness or attachment to my friends, arises from mistaking our character: *self* steals in, and every second tear I shed is on my own account.—Ella weeps only for them; she loses the sense of her own concern, in her acute sensibility for their's; and instead of being the helpless and the useless creature my soft constitution makes me, is collected, firm, and alive to every occasion of soothing, of obviating the sorrows or oppressions of those she loves.

SHE knows not that I do her this justice.—She bid me not tell you, that Ferdinand's safety and your repose are the objects that engross her whole soul. She plays with even the gravest, the most interesting subjects, for your amusement; and you place to the account of levity, what is, in fact, the most exalted proof of friendship and affection.

MRS. MILD MAY is much yours.—We drink your health twice every day, as a tribute of love and duty; talk over your accomplishments, whenever we have an opportunity; and allow no *she* to be worthy, in comparison with your sweet self.

WILSON

WILSON admires your miniature so much, that he has given it to an eminent master to copy on a larger scale; so that your portrait will soon grace our little paradise: for so beautiful is the dwelling we occupy, that you would accuse me of romance in the extreme, if I was to attempt to give you a description of it.

Mrs. MILD MAY has made Wilson master of a low phaeton, and an animal of the Roan breed to draw it, in which I take my morning's airing round the park; for when I go to Camp, I go with Mrs. Mildmay; and when once this cloud is brushed by us, I shall pronounce us the happiest of human beings.

FERDINAND's spirits do not fail him in the least. Conscious of no blame, he has nothing to fear or blush for; and the only accusation brought against him is, that he was Melvin's second, though poor fellow! he did not so much as suspect his design of going out; and sought him on his disappearance, with the most friendly diligence, to prevent, not to abet the rencounter.

Mr. MELVIN declares, and I believe him, that his own confinement would sit quite easy upon him, if Ferdinand was but at liberty. However, as it has been the General's pleasure to make Ferdinand a prisoner on his account, he will not accept his enlargement on other terms than clearing up that youth's conduct, and making him a compensation for the unjustifiable violence that has been exercised towards him. He is a brave fellow, madam, and will not falsify his word; so that whatever his fortune or connexions may do in his favour, Ferdinand will reap the advantage of, as if he actually participated his claims to consideration.

WHAT

WHAT a world, what a bad world it is, madam! where the poor must languish for justice, whilst the rich are tolerated in injustice.—But I rest not my hopes on the fluctuating humour, or capricious condescension of any man!—Heaven will protect the innocent, and put the guilty to confusion;—and in that confidence I subscribe myself

Your most affectionate,

LYDIA WILSON.

## LETTER XVII.

A M glad I have brought you down to the footstep of my throne to sue for pardon.—Lydia is not half so *circumstantial* as me, in her relations;—a great discovery That!—and you find, that you have misconstrued my *gaieté du cœur*. I ask no more: you are not only pardoned your error in judgment, but received by our *gracious self* once more into favour. The strong should support the weak, the humane should pity, and the generous forgive: let oblivion, therefore, accomplish the work of reconciliation between us.

MELVIN is a fine fellow!—A message was sent him this morning, that as the challenge was attended



tended with no ill consequences to any party, it would be overlooked by the Higher Powers; but lest indulgence to him might be cruelty to others, it should be proclaimed that the next thing of the kind, which happened in the Camp, should be punished with the utmost severity.

MELVIN asked, "Where his friend was—  
"his innocent, his injured friend?"

THEY replied, "still in custody."

"THEN," said he, you may return with my  
"declaration, that I will remain where I am,  
"until he is sent to tell me he has received satisf-  
"faction for the wrong he has sustained."

THE messenger flew back with the Chief of  
Chief's compliments, and "that it was not in  
"his power to oblige him; for that the young  
"man he called his friend, had other charges  
"lodged against him than merely fomenting  
"broils, and must be brought to trial."

"VERY well," said Melvin, "we will come  
"up together, and hear what our enemies and  
"our judges have to say to us."

"BUT my Lord N—— had wrote to enquire  
"into the cause of his confinement, and the Chief  
"of all Chiefs had told him, his conduct should  
"be excused; and therefore he was desired to  
"return peaceably to his marquée."

"HE would not quit the spot he was on till  
"Ferdinand led him forth," was the only answer  
they could obtain.

THUS, my dear madam, you perceive, when  
power is stretched beyond its due tone, it loses  
its spring, and degenerates into downright abject-  
ness of spirit.

MELVIN has great and potent friends, that will  
not suffer him to be mal-treated with impunity;  
and the walls of Troy were offers to the resoluti-

he is master of; for twenty times ten years, (if such was the life of man) would be all incapable of shaking it; so that in the Camp language, I can assure you, *all is well*.

BESIDES, it is well known, that the present reign will soon be interrupted by the arrival of our Monarch, who is a lover of clemency, of truth (when he can get at it), and will not take this matter on common report, but sift it to the bottom, and settle it in a *princely* manner.

MELVIN has already drawn up a memorial of the whole transaction, wherein the malice and meanness of the attack on my father's character, his poverty, his family, is stated in such manly, such touching, such sensible terms, that the Sovereign will discover the hard usage Rivers has sustained, uncomplainingly sustained, during a long, long period, whilst he was shedding his blood in his service.

THIS Melvin will get presented for the royal perusal, the hour of his arrival at Coxheath; and the great merit of his performance is, that it is concise, and at the same time so intelligent, that every word will paint out to his majesty's view whatever can be wished he should be made acquainted with.

THIS is, however, a secret between him and me; so that if Lydia had continued your darling correspondent, you would have been uninformed of an article of the first importance to your peace.

WILSON (the honest, good-natured Wilson) has been with my father, to enquire whether money, the key to all things, would not be useful on this occasion; but he assures him, his boy should not purchase his liberty, if he was master of millions, but abide the decision of a tribunal, an honourable tribunal, whose *fiat* will not only speak

him into his quondam situation, but convert his disgrace into a triumph; and the poor fellow went away visibly disappointed.

YET, though he is for flying to pecuniary remedies on every disease, no money has he beyond what will answer the conveniencies of himself and family.—He has credit, however, with a certain lady, who would be happy to serve Mr. Rivers in the second person, in order to lighten the burthen of obligation nice minds incur, when their friends, to make *themselves* happy, make themselves serviceable to those they love.—My father said, “Wilson wanted nothing but a fortune to “be as great and as amiable as Mrs. Mildmay.” That is, however, a point which cannot be brought to proof; and so he must pardon my secret doubtings, though I think very tolerably of the young man’s goodness of heart.

My Clerical Admirer has received his dismissal.—His visits, madam, were so frequent, after the rencounter you are acquainted with, that he fairly lived with us; and I suspecting him of foul play, asked my father’s leave to give him his audience *de congé*.—He was piqued; he muttered somewhat and departed. I felt myself relieved by the incident, and am now both in appearance and reality only Melvin’s.

MRS. MILD MAY visits the youths every morning. Hospitals, prisons, have no terrors for her, if she can rejoice the minds of their inhabitants!—She rallies Melvin on his want of gallantry to his mistress, and tells him, it is plain, from his voluntary captivity, that friendship is the most lively sentiment in his bosom.

WITH Ferdinand she talks of you; prophesies the most flattering things respecting you; and I should not be surprised to hear, if she started as mediator

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mediator and plenipotentiary between the families; the corner stone of their reconciliation being the intermarriage of their heir-apparents.—Ferdinand will inherit all his father's virtues, madam, (a goodly portion let me tell you!) as you your father's treasures; therefore do not look with disdain upon the comparison.

I HAD thoughts of waiting upon the grim Sovereign of these martial domains, and, throwing myself at his feet, melt his hard nature into mercy, but I find it as a received proverb, "That flint shall become flummery, and steel a whipt syllabub, when a tear of humanity bedims his eye, or a sigh of benevolence agitates his heart."—You may imagine I profited by the hint, and left him undisturbed by my presence.

It was hoped Coxheath would have been the first spot of royal visitation;—but, alas! it will be the last; which is, indeed, the ground of the Brazen's presumption.—His lordship, you will find on the eclairsissement, is the grand hinge on which my brother's persecution turns; and that it is in his person he is seeking to wound us all: but you, as well as I, are too good a Christian not to defy the devil and all his works, workmen and worshippers,—in which catalogue his Lordship and his Lordship's train are infallibly included.

My service to Sir Ferdinand, and tell him, that my highest ambition in this world, is, to receive an invitation from him to pass a few weeks of the recess in Somersetshire! No pilgrim ever made a voyage to Mecca with more heart-felt devotion than I should perform that journey!—I am not one of the *offending* parties; I am nothing but a harmless female, and his most obliged humble servant.—See that you do my bidding with a good grace,



grace, and obtain me a gracious answer, as you value the esteem, the approbation, the affectionate attachment of your

ELLA RIVERS.

## LETTER XVII.

**SPORTINGLY** as you concluded your last epistle, it has produced a most happy effect! My father—the contrast, as your pen has been pleased to delineate him, of **SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE**—was touched by your remembrance of him.

“No, Heaven forbid,” said he, “I should confound the innocent with the guilty, admitting both father and son were guilty of the sin of ingratitude in its highest turpitude! Tell her, therefore, I shall be delighted to see her. —How are they all?” said he, after some little pause. —“What an amiable family I once believed them to be!—A little romantic the father and mother, indeed! for they disobliged their friends, to marry and become beggars. —But I loved your mother well enough to have gone the same lengths to have obtained her, and so never saw that article of their conduct in

“the

“ the likeness of a fault, until they flew in my  
 “ face, spurned at my long-continued friendship,  
 “ and renounced me and mine with a menacing  
 “ air.—Don’t you remember how he looked,  
 “ when I called after him, tame fool as I was !  
 “ when he tore the children away from us ?

“ My dear Sir,” said I, “ if I had only the  
 “ courage to tell you his motives, instead of con-  
 “ demning, you would love and honour him !”

“ How’s that ?” said he ; “ how’s that ?”

“ I, YOUR child, was the only only one to  
 “ blame on that occasion !”

“ PROVE me that, prove that to me, and you  
 “ shall find me as forward to rectify my mistake,  
 “ as I was to commit it —Let’s hear how and  
 “ about it.”

I BLUSHED, I suppose, Ella ; looked now in  
 his face, then on the ground ; it was so awkward  
 to proclaim my regard for a young fellow, besides  
 the uncertainty of the reception my confession  
 might meet with. However, necessity at length  
 made me valiant. I opened my whole soul to  
 him ; not forgetting a little of your father’s ad-  
 dress to me at parting.

He was moved !——“ Very well,” said he,  
 “ very well, indeed ! The young fellow might  
 “ be liked without dishonour to the fairest she—  
 “ But—you shall know my farther mind on the  
 “ subject in a few days.”

I DURST not push the matter, though the sus-  
 pence he left me in was a cruel one.—He indeed,  
 to convince me he was not angry with me, made  
 me a present of the inclosed note, kissed me, and  
 told me “ I had been a good girl !—a noble girl !  
 “ —and he was satisfied.”

Now, if you say one word about the inclosed  
 little loan (for you shall pay me again, take no-

tice, at some future period) I will never forgive you. Let Mrs. Mildmay have the credit of it, but employ it so as to promote the convenience of those we love.

YOUR Melvin shall henceforth be my Melvin, for his steady affection to the deserving Ferdinand; nor do I require a stronger testimony of his fine taste, understanding, or principles, than his friendship for that young fellow. — Goodness to goodness, Ella, is a natural attraction.

How impatiently shall I wait the expiration of the few days my father mentioned! — “And in a few days,” said he, “you shall know my farther mind on the subject!” — He has certainly some secret correspondent which informs him of all that passes; and either from natural liberality, or the force of your brother and Mr. Rivers’s merits, makes favourable reports.

YOU are good, beyond all example good, in this last letter; and I am consoled and cheered, if not absolutely satisfied: but I hope Ferdinand will not think of making a second campaign. — Preposterous! — On what motives? — His King knows not he has such a servant, and the Royal Delegates are not capable of discovering his perfections: or, if they could, would maliciously trace them to false causes; call his modesty, meanness of spirit; his fortitude, boldness; his resignation, insolence; and his honour, pride. It is only in the shade of life his virtues can shine forth in their native lustre; unannoyed by the rough blightings of envy, untainted by the rude breath of calumny, and uninjured by the base misrepresentation of designing and wicked men, who seek

to

to rise on the ruins of the worthy. — Write, write on, my best girl, and believe me to be,

Yours, &c.

C. FLETCHER.

## LETTER XIX.

**T**HE post past by our door without calling! — I would not believe but there was a mistake in it; and ringing my bell, sent some half-dozen messengers out to enquire what could occasion it. —  
 “There were no letters for me whatever.” —  
 “Bid the postman come in, I must speak to him myself.” —  
 “FRIEND, pray oblige me so far as to look over your parcels again! You must have misplaced it. I am confident my friends have written to me. Here is half a-crown for your trouble; and if you find me one, I will give you another.” —  
 “It was in vain,” the poor fellow said, “to lie; for he had not one, if his life depended upon it, with my direction. But if I pleased, since I was so earnest, I might satisfy myself, — spreading them all out before me.”

ALL my neighbours, Ella, were made happy;



my heart and only mine was wounded by disappointment ; I sent the fellow away in something like dishumour, though sensible he was not to blame ; and when alone, wept most bitterly.

IT cannot be out of tenderness you have omitted writing ! — The worst news had only made me miserable ; your silence distracts me ! — what can have befallen all my friends ! — All, all in custody ! — All dead or dying ! — I am bewildered in conjectures, and give up the possibility of guessing with painful regret.

NOTHING but some fatal chance can have incited you to neglect me ! — Yet tell me I am deceived, and I will thank you for proving to me I am an idle, fearful girl ; and first make bugbears, then terrify myself by them.

MY father too remains wrapped up in reserves ! — He must read my anxiety in my countenance ; yet has the firmness (not to say the unkindness) to read it unmoved. Did his peace of mind depend upon my voice, oh how speedily should he enjoy it ! — I mean, if it was possible for us to change characters : for you need not tell me (as the case now stands,) it is my duty to be attentive to a father's repose.

WHY should you tempt the weak of heart ? Many a damsel in my distressful situation would long since have broke through every restraint, and visited your Camp to enquire for him she loved. — Neither a regard for the world's opinion, a father's displeasure, nay, what ought to be of the highest consequence to her, the good opinion of the man so dear to her, would have deterred her ; but she would have flown on the wings of indiscretion and impatience, to get at the desired tidings.

I am,

I am, 'tis true, incapable of every such desperate step.—What may seem self-denial, I consider as necessity.—I will be worthy of Ferdinand's attachment, whatever it costs him; and shew him the wife he may expect, in the article of sharing his difficulties, by my resolution in my single state.—And I know my conduct will have all its merit with him.—Wretch that I am, perhaps he is now no more!—Perhaps—But I forbear to draw a picture that would rend my soul!—O Ella, Ella! can you forgive yourself for thus trifling with the sensibility of her who is most truly, &c.

Your

C. FLETCHER.

L E T

## LETTER XX.

**I**LAMENT, my dear madam, as much as you can do, that a letter did not reach you, agreeably to your expectation; and where to lay the blame, I know not. Mrs. Mildmay's people could have no temptation to suppress it; Lord Brazen's friends to intercept it. I wrote every incident, from the dispatching my former epistle down to the hour of sealing and sending the last to the post: some cross accident has intervened, and perhaps we must never hope to see it more.

My poor dear father has drooped ever since Ferdinand's confinement; but it is his altered countenance alone that speaks his discontent.—O what a sting is poverty to the noble mind!—Yet is there no extracting it; for he will not, possibly he cannot, return Mrs. Mildmay's affection.

I TOLD you Lord Brazen was at the bottom of this business!—Read the inclosed, and then tell me, if there is such a cold-blooded villain in existence.

TO MRS. MILDMAI.

"MADAM,

"FAME informs me, that Rivers's boy has  
"got into hold for tattling too freely of his super-  
"riors; of the number of which I have the ho-  
"nour to make one.

"Now to prove to you that he has a gene-  
"rous adversary to deal with, if you will put it  
"in

“ in my power to stand forth in his behalf, I am  
 “ ready.—You have the disposal of your for-  
 “ tune, and a certain Lady’s hand, entirely in  
 “ yourself ; give me an instance of your com-  
 “ plaisance, your liberality, and you shall find  
 “ me all you can wish ; a warm admirer of  
 “ yourself, and a warm advocate for the un-  
 “ thinking boy you esteem.

“ As to my last letter, it was wrote in the  
 “ height of my disappointment at being refused ;  
 “ it therefore should be considered as a proof of  
 “ my love, in proportion as its contents may im-  
 “ peach my politeness. — To be unguarded on  
 “ some occasions, is meritorious.

The less my Wit, the more my Love appears.

“ says the soft Sappho, who perfectly understood  
 “ the *science* of the tender passion.

“ SHALL I do myself the honour of writing to  
 “ the General, that I may make a point of ob-  
 “ taining Rivers the younger his liberty ? I think  
 “ I may flatter myself I should not write in vain.  
 “ —But your fair self must set me the example  
 “ of mercy, of goodness, you would have me  
 “ pursue.—You are, then, in the strictest sense  
 “ of the word, the Arbitress of his fate ; and  
 “ may command me, dispose me as you please.—  
 “ I shall impatiently expect your answer,

“ And am, Madam, &c.

“ BRAZEN.”

—And so much for Lord Brazen’s eloquence, his  
 arts of persuasion !—You would, I presume, like  
 to read Mrs. Mildmay’s answer. — Thus then I  
 oblige you.

“ To



" TO LORD BRAZEN.

" MY LORD,

" I HAVE received two of the most gallant  
" epistles from your Lordship, that, I must con-  
" ceive, were ever written.

" FOR the first, I return you my most hearty  
" thanks;—It let me at once into your character,  
" and I congratulated myself that my soul had re-  
" fused acquaintance with you.

" FOR the second, I shall only observe, that  
" the heart that could accept a bribe to do a good  
" natured action, is not the heart for my money.  
" The West-Indian must write in the mercan-  
" tile stile; and your Lordship will not be  
" shocked, because you are prepared for every  
" thing that is low bred from that quarter. Had  
" you exerted any little interest you may possess  
" for Virtue's sake, your conduct would have  
" had all it's merit with me: but, to attempt to  
" make a cat's-paw of the brother's distress to  
" help you to the hand of the sister, is so poor,  
" so paltry an action, that I hasten to take my  
" leave of you on paper, as I have already done  
" of all personal intercourse with you, for ever;  
" and doubt not but Mr. Rivers and his son will  
" find more able support from their own unsulli-  
" ed fame, than they could possibly do in the boast-  
" ed friendship of Lord Brazen. I have the ho-  
" nour my Lord, to be an independent woman, and

" E. MILD MAY."

" And let Lord Brazen (the dear woman says)  
" do his worst!—If Mr. Rivers would give her  
" leave

"leave, she would soon shew whose interest was most powerful ! But she wishes him to owe no obligations to any thing but his own merits and the merits of his son's cause, who is a cruelly-oppressed and wrongfully-imprisoned young fellow."

WHEN the matter will be brought to a happy issue, I know not ; but Melvin holds fast his integrity, and demands a Court-Martial for them both ; "when his Majesty," he says, "must know all ; and the greatest will be found the least ; the mighty must be crest-fallen."

DID my father but bear up better, I should be satisfied, and wait the event with Christian patience ; but I can perceive it is the narrowness of his fortune, and the obscurity of his fame, that wounds him thus. He cannot augment the one, he cannot announce the other ; and Mrs. Mildmay is too tenderly connected with us, not to be suspected of partiality, when doing him barely justice.

WRITING, once my delight, is now become a task.—I perform it, because it is demanded of me ;—demanded by every tie of friendship and affection between us ;—but I have lost all my subjects.—Our visiting parties are at an end ; our social circle is broke up ; even the Camp incidents pass unheeded by me, and my whole thoughts are divided between Melvin and Ferdinand, and my beloved father. Be assured, whatever disappointments in the letter you may experience, do not originate from me ; for I will send you a line by every post, 'till it is again in my power to subscribe myself

Your happy,

as well as your affectionate,

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER

## LETTER XXI.

**T**HAT great events often originate from trivial incidents, is a trite, but my dear madam, a true observation ; and you will find it verified in the person of your friend.

My father's pensiveness increased upon us until he confessed himself ill.—Ill indeed ! for he was no longer able to go abroad, much less perform the duties of his profession.

MRS. MILD MAY retired often to her closet—to weep, I was well informed by the redness of her eyes ; though she had taken, I doubt not, every precaution to conceal that testimony of her tenderness.

A MESSENGER arrived from the Camp !—Mr. Rivers was much worse.

“ ELLA, my dear,” said Mrs. Mildmay “ we will make him an instant visit.”

SHE was profoundly silent during our whole little journey, and I could perceive some important matter was revolving in her bosom.—We arrived, and were conducted to the bed-side of the poor desponding Lieutenant.

HE raised his head.

“ YOUR goodness, madam—”

“ Alas, Sir !” said she ; I am now come to forfeit your esteem, your good opinion for ever ; but Heaven can witness for me the purity of the friendship I bear you !—You must not interrupt me.—Had you been successful in life, the secret I am now going to disclose would

" would have been buried in my breast. I should  
" have seen your countenance lighted up with  
" smiles of gladness, and should have rejoiced in  
" your joy. But I behold you the prey of silent  
" anguish! You are dying, Sir, before my eyes,  
" a martyr to paternal affection, and unrewarded  
" merit.—What avails the fortune God has given  
" me, if I must survive the friend of my heart?  
" —Oh pity the conflict I sustain! reconcile me  
" to myself, by shewing me you do not despise  
" me; and at least entitle me to mix my tears  
" with those of your beloved children:—in a  
" word, Sir, condescend to be my husband."

" ELLA, my dear," cried my father, am I  
" delirious? or is it Mrs. Mildmay that speaks  
" to me thus?"

I KNEELED down, and, taking his hand in  
mine, wept—but could not reply.

THE same messenger who informed us of my  
father's increased disorder, had borne the intelli-  
gence to poor Wilton, and he followed us with  
all expedition to Camp.

MY Father was about to speak.—Never did I  
behold Wilton before with dissatisfaction; but  
the moment was so critical, I could not forgive  
his interruption.—The interruption was, indeed,  
extraordinary; for rushing in, "Do I live to be-  
hold you thus?" cried he "my deliverer,  
" my father! and shall your enemies triumph  
" over you?—Then it is time I should make  
" my last request to you.

" WAS it not your hand that raised me from  
" the ground—that called back my fleeting spirit  
" —that healed my wounds—that fed, that pro-  
" tected me, when wholly destitute of friends, of  
" money, of habitation?—Did I not receive all  
" this, did I not enjoy it, without sinking under  
the



“ the weight of the obligation?—Mrs. Mildmay knows I was proud of your goodness; yet have feared to ask one little favour of you. It has hung on my lips numberless times!—Your son, might he not hope his father would share his good, as he had shared his ill fortune!—Your Lydia, too, you have bestowed upon me! Then on my knees let me implore you to accept this waistcoat,” drawing it forth from his inside coat-pocket, “ the legacy of my old master! He gave it me to make me happy; but your acceptance of it can alone induce me to call it valuable.”

ON my honour, I thought his intellects were impaired, and rose hastily to give him way.—An old fatten waistcoat!—I looked first at that, then at him; and most sincerely pitied him.

“ My dear fellow,” said my father, what am I to understand from all this?—I know your noble-mindedness, and thence alone hesitate to comply with your request.—When you mentioned the waistcoat as your prize, I expected to have heard it contained hidden treasure. You forebore to hint at such a thing; and for your sake I was sorry to find myself disappointed. But you now call my attention back:—I began to suspect I was right in my conjectures; and I must therefore know the value of the gift, before I take it even from a son.”

“ Is this like Mr. Rivers?—I will, however, answer you truly, on one condition.”

“ NAME it,” said my father.

“ THAT you consent to let it be divided equally amongst your children, after reserving a father’s portion to yourself. If you deny my this, you are not my father.”

I HAD got the waistcoat by this time in my hands, not knowing what I did.

“ CAN

"CAN you, continued he, " refuse me a request, on which I solemnly declare my happiness is dependent?—Nay, Sir, your *morality* must engage you to it; for I have bound myself, by a most sacred vow, never to touch a farthing my old friend intended me, unless with the general participation of you and yours. Hitherto I have most religiously kept my word; nor will I break it, though your present circumstances has wrung the secret of my wealth perhaps prematurely from me."

"You deserve to be happy your own way," said my father; "I therefore yield the point, and the waistcoat is mine.—Ella, Mrs. Mildmay, are witnesses of the gift, and now tell me what I am master of."

"THAT is impossible, Sir," said Wilton.—"Every one of those buttons incloses a brilliant. —The good old man apprised me of his intention a moment or two before he carried it into execution, and pointed out to me the lot I should take, together with the nature, though not the extent of its value; for he knew it not himself. It was for this reason he conjured me to depart as soon as he should expire."

"WHAT a finished deceiver," said Mrs. Mildmay, "have I taken into my service! How could you pass yourself off for a forlorn wretch, when you knew you was as rich as a Nabob! —I shall never forgive you.—Does Lydia—?" "THIS, my dear madam, is the first time the confession has escaped my lips; and though I am the husband of a woman I most tenderly love, I never called myself completely blessed till now.—Now, Sir, you are indeed my father!"

"THEN

"THEN hear me," said the Lieutenant, "and, on your duty, oppose not my resolution.—"

"The number of buttons is seven; three of which I insist upon your receiving from me, as my gift; the remaining four shall be divided between Ferdinand and Ella."

"AH Sir! and can you insist upon being the alone-unbenefited person by the treasure I have so anxiously preserved for your sake?"

"You will forgive me," said my father, "when I tell you, I am already provided for; a brighter jewel than all you can boast, the good providence of Heaven has this day bestowed upon me!—That lady, Sir, is mine!—mine by every tender, every affectionate tie!—"

"My heart has been obedient to my head; but the war was hardly sustained.—My honour forbade, my admiration bade me pay my devoirs to her; but there was no separating her from her fortune, and that silenced me for ever on the subject.—Will you, madam, will you let my son Wilton have the honour of joining our hands?"

WILSON overturned a camp-stool upon my toes, and threw an umbrella into my face, by his eagerness to perform the pleasing task; and as it is agreed a special messenger shall be dispatched to the Commons for a special licence, it is probable before this reaches you I shall have a mother, as well as a father.

HAVING somewhat recovered ourselves, I went off with Wilton in Mrs. Mildmay's coach, to tell Ferdinand the "wonderful works of Providence," as my father called it; Lydia, you must understand, previously alighting from her phaeton, in pursuit of her runaway husband:—She had perceived his mind uncommonly oppressed,

"pressed, and could no longer contain herself—  
 "so we left the fond pair to unfold the tale  
 "of their and our felicity to her, at their lei-  
 "sure."

FERDINAND forgot his own situation, him-  
 self, me, in his joy ; but, my dear madam, you  
 was amply remembered.—He would write to Sir  
 Ferdinand the instant he knew the value of Wil-  
 son's present ; he would no longer constrain him-  
 self from writing to you ;—He would work mi-  
 racles ;—when, descending from his high flight,  
 he recollected the first necessary step was unlock-  
 ing his prison-doors, restoring his fame, &c. &c.  
 before he could, with any degree of propriety,  
 (through the medium of your father's consent,) lay  
 his heart at your feet.

MELVIN was as boisterous in his transports  
 as the Monster in the Tempest ; and, generous  
 fellow as he is, felt more, much more on my fa-  
 ther's account than his own.—“ The poor Lieu-  
 tenant would now so overlook his foes, and  
 “ their little souls would be so dismayed !”—  
 However not a word of the diamonds is to be  
 told abroad ; and we are to seem to derive every  
 thing from Mrs. Mildmay's union, let the world  
 say what it will.

WHEN I returned to my father's tent, behold  
 he was risen, seated in his easy chair, and at  
 breakfast ;—Lydia pouring out the Tea, and now  
 sweetening the slop-bason instead of the cups, and  
 now burning her fingers with the tea-pot.—There  
 never was a happier breakfast (as Stern says) since  
 the flood !

NEED I add aught to this epistle?—to its length,

its



its intelligence, or its —, I want a word, and so shall only add, that

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

*Note*, I mean to write a Novel, and call it—*The Waistcoat*, according to the taste of the times; and I think I may be bold to say, that if ever there was merit in a title, there would be in this, though not so high-sounding as some that have lately appeared in our prints.

Once more adieu!

ELLA RIVERS.

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## LETTER XXII.

WHEN it was recollected to be necessary to return to the Hall, that my father might have a little sleep, we took our leave, (all except Lydia, who would attend upon him for the day,) in very unusual spirits; my father in a most agreeable manner telling Mrs. Mildmay, she must be now sensible he was not above being obliged by the friend of his heart.—“You, and only you, my dear madam, shall be Rivers’s benefactors.”

WE attacked Wilson in the warmest terms on the deception he had practised upon us, his wife, and all mankind.

“Pardon me there,” said he, “for I was under the necessity to let Davies into some part of my secret.—A little button at the collar of the waistcoat, which Mr. Rivers did not perceive wanting, was cut off by me in India, and deposited in his hands as a security for several sums of money he accommodated me with, and the expences of my passage.—The truth is, he had so much generosity, as for a long time to refuse accepting the pledge, and was at last alone prevailed upon by my declaring I would be served on no other conditions.—He has disposed of it since our arrival, and I am now master of a very decent sum of money for an humble and a private fellow, as the jewel bore a tollerable price.”

“BETTER

“BETTER and better I” said Mrs. Mildmay.—“So you find, Ella, we are every way “abused?”

“It will be in your power, madam, to punish him as he deserves; by proving a very mother-in-law to his Lydia;—the only way to come at him, and make him smart effectually.”

WE now expressed our astonishment, that in the vicissitudes of life he had been exposed to, he could preserve his prize.—He answered, “He wore it continually, night as well as day, by way of garment; that the meanness of its appearance secured it from all suspicion; and his old friend valued himself much on the device of covering the buttons with wrought leather, —at once a defence and a disguise for the brilliants they contained.”

WE next turned our thoughts to poor Ferdinand; and Mrs. Mildmay, with our concurrence, resolved to write to a Great Man, her particular friend, and enclose Lord Brazen’s two epistles for his perusal; then stating the particulars and origine of the hard treatment my brother had sustained, ask his Lordship (her friend I mean) if it did not clearly appear to result from that quarter, and how she should proceed?—The letter was accordingly dispatched so soon as we reached Mildmay-Hall.

The evening brought a message from camp, that my father was much better, but that Lydia would remain with him that one night; and they hoped to see us early to breakfast the ensuing morning.

THIS was sufficient; though, if we had not rallied Wilton, he would have set off to support his *cara sposa* in her filial watching.—We laughed

away

away the hours till we had notice supper was on the table, and then sat down, and eat like so many farmers.

WILSON's heart was so open, that he drank bumper after bumper to the renewed health, and approaching felicity of his noble and beloved father, and confusion (Mrs. Mildmay said *reformation*) to his enemies; and so well satisfied were we with our subjects, and with each other, that we did not break up our little party till midnight.

I AM more than ever impatient for the Royal Review, now that I shall figure away in *my mother's* coach-and-six, and be known all over the Heath, for the daughter of the rich West-Indian, the amiable Mrs. Mildmay; and for such I hope to be presented to their Majesties, by a man of the first fashion, who is Mrs. Mildmay's most obedient humble servant; though not in a lover-like way; for she lends him cash whenever he stands in need of it, and, from approving his political principles, has espoused his interest in many parts of the kingdom at the last Election; and it will be his own fault, if she forsakes him in that, or any other point, in future.

So soon as Mrs. Mildmay is converted into Mrs. Rivers, their nuptials will be announced, — announced in *terrorem* throughout the Camp; — the poor Lieutenant will have his suite of servants, his horses, his carriages, to attend him; and thus possessed of wealth, of fame, and friends, — Heaven and Earth! — what a blazing comet he will appear to his foes! I enjoy their gnashing of teeth, by anticipation; am lifted out of myself; and can barely recollect how much I ought to be

Your, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.



## LETTER XXIII

**Y**OUR family and friends, my dearest Ella, are a chemical compound of all the worst vices of the worst part of their species, viz. dissimulation, hypocrisy, intrigue, deception, &c. &c. &c.

MY father sent for me down about half an hour ago; and on my entering the parlour received me with, "Well, my good girl, we shall now see whether Ferdinand deserves you. — Have you any letter from him?"

I REPLIED, "I had not."

"NAY, for that matter," returned he, "I believe I am somewhat too hasty in my expectations; for he can by this time scarcely know his change of fortune."

It was lucky I had not read your joyful tidings, for your diamonds had all been innocently spread out by me to my father's view.

"MAY I ask, Sir," said I, with an agitation I could not conceal, "what it is you mean?"

"A BOY of six weeks old, the only bar to the Lieutenant's inheritance of a fine estate, died last night of the Small Pox. They were so wise as not to inoculate the babe, and so have provided both for it and your friends. The father has been dead near three months, and was first-cousin to Rivers the elder, though too proud and too ill-natured to take notice of him after his marriage into a low family."

THIS, then, Ella, this is the avenue your father alluded to! — How prudent it was of him to bring you up without the knowledge of what

might

might never have reached you ! More young minds are undone by such false politics, than by any other error of education whatever. Hope only raised to be disappointed, is the height of imprudence and cruelty !—*Your* father, my dear, acted like himself.

Now here will he wed with Mrs. Mildmay in the character of a poor man, when, lo ! he is master of a very handsome, though, perhaps, not equal fortune with herself ! — And this you call honour, I suppose, and delicacy, and generosity, and all the fine names you can string together.

My heart is relieved from all its cares, but for Ferdinand's liberty ; for it is plain, he has only to make the overture, to obtain Sir Ferdinand's alliance. — Here is another stroke of providential interference, that neither you or I could have presumed to expect, any more than we could have foreseen it !—May our general re-union be not far distant !

I AM sorry for Sir Ferdinand's credit, that it cannot be denied he knew of your family-dependencies, from his first connexion with it ; that his resentment began to abate from the exact period of the infant's inoculation ; and that his revived friendship takes its date from that infant's death.—There is merit nevertheless, Ella, in the *advance* towards a reconciliation coming from him, as he really was roughly dealt by at our separation, be the motives as laudable as they may.

If what I now tell you is intended to be kept a secret by your father, I beg you will not be so officious as to betray it. You know he is a very Quixote in delicacy, and, if you oppose or defeat his schemes, may jilt the sweet widow at last ; for there are male as well as female coquets, my dear, in this good world.

YET if the next news I receive from Camp is not your brother's happy and honourable enlargement, I shall droop in the midst of all this good fortune,

Your wretched

C. FLETCHER.

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## LETTER XXIV.

**Y**OU are a censorious, nay, a scurrilous girl! My father, madam, scorns deception, and, if you was a man, would call you to severe account for your unwarrantable attack on his character. — Let that pass, however; for I have more important matters on the tapis.

To breakfast, agreeable to the invitation mentioned in the conclusion of my last letter, did we go to Lieutenant Rivers's *marquise*. — The Lieutenant was up, and ready to receive us. — He had slept the whole night through. — Dejection of heart, madam, was his disease, and returning happiness, I trust, will be his cure.

Mrs. MILD MAY blushed, when she entered. My father led her to a seat. — She was quite at a loss how to behave.

“My kind and good friend,” said my father, politely taking her hand, “is it possible you should repent the honour you have done me? And if you do not repent, what is become of the graceful and engaging familiarity with which you were wont to treat me? I have told you all my weakness; how painfully I constrained myself, to preserve what I believed to be the character of an honest man: your confidence has melted down all my resolves, and I profess myself not only your most devoted, but



“ your most affectionate Rivers; profess that  
 “ my sentiments of you for years have been such  
 “ as merit like yours must infallibly inspire; and  
 “ that henceforth I shall live openly, as I have  
 “ long done secretly, only for you.”

“ I WILL tell you then,” said Mrs. Mildmay,  
 with all the becoming modesty of her sex, “ on  
 “ what terms we will meet.”

My father was attentive.

“ WE will suppose, Sir, you have said every  
 “ thing that can be said upon the tender subject  
 “ you allude to; and we will look forward, as per-  
 “ sons who perfectly understand each other, and  
 “ have agreed to have but one house and one in-  
 “ terest; and with the friendship that does credit  
 “ to our sensibility, and the good sense that ought  
 “ to distinguish our time of life, at a convenient  
 “ period obtain the sanction of the laws of our  
 “ Country for spending our days together; ob-  
 “ tain it as an act of moral necessity, without  
 “ any of the parade or preparation, either verbal  
 “ or otherwise, that is suitable only to our sons  
 “ and daughters.”

My father bowed in acquiescence; and when  
 the licence arrives, they will be made man and  
 wife. — How sweetly did this sweet woman cut the  
 thread of love and soft nonsense, and teach both  
 males and females to respect, to revere her con-  
 duct! — She could not, you know, live unmar-  
 ried under the same roof with a man, though  
 with the purity of an angel, uncensured, and to  
 have married less discreetly in the face of her Sons  
 and Daughters, as she kindly called us, would not  
 have proved her uniformly MRS. MILD MAY. —  
 But I am mistaken, if she does not find an ador-  
 ing strain in the person of her husband to the end  
 of her existence, and have the finest things said to  
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her of any wife in the kingdom ; for it is my father's *forte* to be complaisant without flattery, assiduous without bustle, and tender without folly. — And so much for Mr. and Mrs. Rivers. — We brought our provision with us, and so dined *en Camp*.

IN the afternoon, and not till the afternoon, came the special messenger with a letter to inform my father of the poor child's death. He read it with a steady countenance ; then presenting it to Mrs. Mildmay in the most agreeable manner, " Be pleased, madam," said he, " to see what has befallen us ! This is my first notice of the incident, for my little cousin died only the night before last."

SHE returned it with a smile, and a significant shake of her head. — " I rejoice, Sir," said she, " and ever shall rejoice in every addition to your happiness, though I must think *we* had sufficient fortune before."

I **BEG** you will learn how to behave yourself, when advancing somewards towards forty. — You may be inclined to take a *second* husband ; more particularly, madam, as my brother will have the honour of being your first ; and at least secure his memory from insult, though you should conceive it unnecessary to persevere in your widowhood beyond a decent period — a period of *nine* years, as is the case with Mrs. Mildmay.

WILSON did not come over till the evening, and presently whispered somewhat to my father.

" **VERY** well," replied he ; and I thought no more of it ; but it seems the licence was arrived.

" I **CANNOT** wait on you in the morning, madam," said my father at parting ; " I therefore flatter myself, as my situation is so criti-

"cal, you will favour me with your company  
"at Camp."

"WITH pleasure Sir! No convenience to  
"yourself or family shall be impeded by idle  
"punctilio,—I will attend you."

SHOULD you take this for a matrimonial as-  
signation?—"You should not."—And why so,  
after what you have read on the subject? For  
my part, I look upon it there were sufficient  
words to the bargain.—Wilson is to have the fel-  
city of giving her away.

BUT I shall not crowd my Mrs. Mildmay's  
wedding into the fag-end of a letter; therefore  
send this away with only telling you that

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

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## L E T T E R   X X V .

Fair Decency, celestial Maid !  
 Descend from Heaven to Beauty's aid !  
 Though Beauty may beget desire,  
 'Tis thou must fan the Lover's fire :  
 For Beauty, like supreme dominion,  
 Is best supported by opinion.  
 If Decency brings no supplies,  
 Opinion falls, and beauty dies.

**T**HERE is a mirror at which you may set your cap becomingly, if you are wise ! and for your sake alone did I take the trouble of quoting it. Fair Decency, madam, wanted no invoking here ; but in *propria persona* attended, as my sister-bride-maid.—Never did Mrs. Mildmay look so lovely ! And when the priest departed, she pressed my hand—“ Now, Ella, I am authorized to shew  
 “ my tenderness for Mr. Rivers' children ; and  
 “ they shall find me all the mother ! ”

MY father ordered breakfast.

LYDIA looked round for her good man, as who should say, “ We are not a compleat sett without him : ” but he was fled, to inform the poor prisoners, it is imagined, of the important business he has been transacting.

“ WE will not wait for him, I can assure you,” said my father.

“ BY no means,” said Mrs.—my mother I would say ; “ it would be very unreasonable,  
 “ indeed,



“ indeed, to punish us for his transgressions ! He  
 “ is now, my good Sir, playing the Busy body  
 “ at your and my expence.”

“ His heart will overflow at his lips,” replied  
 the Lieutenant, “ on some occasions : and, for  
 “ my part, I can most readily excuse him on  
 “ this, for the sake of the temptation.”

NEED I report their joy !—I shall call to re-  
 ceive their compliments to-morrow.

AND now comes the most interesting part of  
 my relation.—Mr. and Mrs. Rivers, we their  
 children dutifully assisting at the consultation,  
 have determined to write to Sir Ferdinand imme-  
 diately, to acquaint him at once with the young  
 man's imprisonment, change of fortune, and *non*  
 misdemeanour ; and ask permission for him, at  
 the conclusion of this his first and last campaign,  
 to visit Somersetshire, with hopes of obtaining  
 your fair hand.—The King is daily expected,  
 my dear ;—and it is indeed become absolutely ne-  
 cessary for the poor troops to go into winter quar-  
 ters : for, notwithstanding the fineness of the  
 season, there are abundance of sick in the hospi-  
 tals.—But I forbear to touch so discordant a key,  
 when love and matrimony is my theme.

My father is of opinion, that when once it  
 comes to be known he is married to a woman of  
 such consequence as Mrs. Mildmay, his son will  
 be restored to him of course ; but we have other  
 strings to our bow. A Great Man, as I have al-  
 ready told you, is applied to ; and we shall expect  
 to hear of some great operation in less than eight  
 and forty hours : I will therefore leave this letter  
 open till I can add, what will be so highly accep-  
 table a piece of news with you, that your lover is  
 at liberty.

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WEILL may gold be called *almighty*, the key to favour, the source of fame, the—But I have not time to pursue this catalogue farther, for hastening to tell you that Melvin and Melvin's friend are both at large, and most obsequiously yours.—The How and When were as follow :

THE messenger dispatched by my father's family, to inform him he was no longer the *poor Lieutenant*, happened to have a relation in Camp, to whom he very naturally communicated the purport of his embassy ; who as naturally imparted it to his acquaintances ; until, in the due course of circulation, it reached the ears of the Subalterns, the Commanders of corps, the General Officers, &c. &c.

CAPTAIN JAMES BRAZEN was the first to *feel tenderly* for us. He waited on the Chief of all Chiefs and acknowledged he had been in an error ; that the *young gentleman's* conduct had been basely misrepresented ; and that he wished much to prove his *ingenuosness*, by making an early and proper apology for what had past : in a word, he entreated that he himself might restore him to his father.

GRACIOUS and condescending Chief !—He complied with Captain James Brazen's request.—Ferdinand was at the door of the marquée before ten in the morning ; and as Melvin's sullen fit was now over, he flew to embrace, to congratulate us, to participate our felicity.—O my dear madam ! it was a truly joyful morning !

BUT mark me !—As I am not afraid of losing Melvin by a little delay, be assured your wedding-day shall be mine ; and so I conclude upon this subject for ever.

THE Great Man's letter has been received, and the *little* Man has offered Mr. Rivers a Company : but, however singular it may be for a Lieutenant, after being in five engagements, and two thirds of his life in his Majesty's service, to ride a *Lieutenant* in his own coach and-six, so it is, and so it will be on the day of days now at hand.

MELVIN and I have invitations to the places where the people of fashion will be to be met with, and we mean to accept them all, for manifold, strong, and striking reasons ; nor will Mrs. Rivers, I hope, disdain being of our party.

I wish you could prevail on Sir Ferdinand to make an excursion with you, his beloved daughter, to Camp ! You can come to us, but we cannot come to you for the present, any more than if we were cast on the plains of Jehoshaphat, " from whose bourne no traveller returns !"—

These moral memento's should always be thrown in, madam, especially under our *elevated* circumstances ; in like manner as King Somebody (for I have not leisure to recollect his name) had his daily monitor to attend him with the admonition of his being human : " Remember thou art a man !" said he.—Remember thou art mortal, say I ; and that however flattering the prospect, or heart-felt the delight you may taste on this or any future occasion, the Kingdom of Saints is not of this world, or uninterrupted happiness.

YET let who may think it right to dash their cup of felicity with fears of to-morrow, I will not follow their example :—

Who can hold a fire in his hand,  
By dreaming of the freezing Caucasus ?  
Or wallow naked in December's snow,  
By bare remembrance of the summer's heat ?

Hence,

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Hence, as we cannot *temper* sorrow by recollected pleasure, I will not *tinge* delight by the remotest ray of possible calamity. All that Heaven, I am persuaded, requires of us is, to bear our mingled lot with becoming fortitude and becoming enjoyment; and to be neither too much exalted by good, or depressed by what we call ill fortune.— I beg you will make yourself mistress of this useful lesson against our re-union; which, if I have any skill in divination, is not far distant.

I am, my dear madam,

Your happy, thrice-happy,

ELLA RIVERS.

LET.



## LETTER XXVI.

See, see the conquering Hero comes!

Sound the trumpet, beat the drums!

THE whole country is turned topsy-turvy! Country-lasses all *be-ribboned*, and ladies all *be-habited*, flock around (for you must understand his majesty is expected every moment) and we are now in our coach-and-four——my father wished we would not have a sett of horses.—Melvin, Wilton, Mrs. Mildmay, and myself, riding forward to meet the cavalcade.—The metropolis must certainly be a desert!——They come! they come! and my pencil and paper are put with all expedition into my pocket.—I refer you to the public prints for the procession, in the manner following:

A serjeant, corporal, and twelve privates of the grenadier guards.

Four grooms in liveries.

Four footmen in full liveries.

Two riding equeries.

An officer of the life guards.

The SOVEREIGN,

Mounted on a fine roan horse (richly ornamented with orange and blue ribbands) dressed in his Royal regimentals. On his right, Lord Amherst as Commander in Chief of the forces. On his left, the Marquis of Lothian.

In the rear, the Generals Keppel and Sloper, the Dukes of Grafton and Devonshire, General Carpenter, and Colonel St. John, with whom his Majesty frequently conversed.

Two horse grenadier guards.

Two grooms.

Two footmen.

A corporal and six private grenadier guards.

The Marquis of Carmarthen in one of her Majesty's post-chaises drawn by four horses.

### The QUEEN,

In her chaise drawn by four horses (in which was Lady Egremont) dressed in her Royal regimentals.

A coach and six with her Majesty's attendants.

Inferior attendants in another.

Footmen, grooms, &c.

A serjeant, corporal and twelve men of the grenadier guards.

*Thirty thousand affectionate and loyal Subjects.*

WELL, my dear madam, how do you find yourself after this glorious sight? Are their Majesties beloved or not by their subjects? Does there appear a spirit of bravery or dejection in the troops? Can you fear invaders—Perish the thought! Britain shall be herself again!—I could have wished the two eldest princes, indeed, had been of the royal party, as they are now of an age for participating martial scenes; but it seems the court-etiquette is, according to the good old primitive times, to extend *their* period of infancy to the last possible moment: and *the lad Isaac*, we read, *went down*, &c. &c. when the *lad*, you must observe, was at least *thirty* years old.—I congratulate the Court on the wisdom of their conduct, though I confess its merit is above my comprehension.

THE

THE Review over, the officers were presented individually to their Sovereign, and had the honour to kiss his hand.—Mr. Rivers' turn, at length arrived!—A company was given him on the spot, and knighthood offered him.—The first he accepted, but declined the last, saying it was his highest ambition to continue his majesty's servant.

I OWN I was not without my secret murmurings, that the other Camps should have the precedence; but I am now convinced that though *last*, *we were not least in love*; and am as loyal a subject as any in his Majesty's dominions.

MAIDSTONE, Mildmay-Hall, &c. &c. were illuminated on the occasion,—and every heart was dilated. It was a carnival, a jubilee, a festive scene beyond what I have language to paint!—Nor did some certain friends of yours make a *mean* figure in the procession.—It was hinted to my father, that a pair of colours were at Ferdinand's service; but he replied, his son had only given him his attendance that *one* campaign, for family reasons, at the expiration of which he would resume the function which was his election, and for which he had been educated—the Church;—so that you see, madam, Mr. Rivers, in every sense of the word, is a man of honour.

BUT though Ferdinand will renounce a military life, Melvin is determined to persevere in it; as also Mr. Rivers. Should then (as it is expected) a new encampment take place next spring, I shall be equally (nay superiorly) capable of sending you all the particulars: for as the *denouement* will most certainly be my becoming the wife of a soldier, I must follow his fortune, where-ever it leads him even to the environs of the embattled field; and, instead of passing my time at Mildmay-Hall, dwell in the midst of martial manœuvres.

SHOULD

SHOULD you more particularly wish to trace us in imagination from spot to spot, I would recommend it to you to furnish yourself with a very excellent PLAN OF COXHEATH CAMP, published in your WESTMINSTER MAGAZINE for the month of August, when reading this additional description, which I nevertheless presume you have already read, and is a most correct one.— By the force of fancy, you may see all I have seen; not forgetting to throw in the graceful appearance of Mr. Rivers' and Mrs. Rivers' young friends.

In this manner their Majesties passed from the right to the left of the line, in front, the officers saluting as they passed; the troops with presented arms; the bands of musick playing martial tunes. Passing the left by the Royal Irish, his Majesty put on his hat (for hitherto he had been uncovered, and the Queen repeatedly paying her compliments from the chaise window.) *A gun.* The whole went to the left-about. Their Majesties passed the rear of the line, came on the front by the first battalion of Royal Scots, and passed the grenadier and light infantry companies, who had formed a separate line, (with which their Majesties seemed much pleased) and came to the centre of the line, between the Suffolk and Cheshire. Here her Majesty went with her suite to the Royal marquee, which was prepared for their reception. *A gun.* To acquaint the army the Sovereign was in the centre. *A gun.* The whole army wheeled to the right by grand divisions, and passed the Sovereign in quick motion, and wheeling to the left, formed again in battalions. Here the artillery took their stations. *Three Guns.* The manual exercise was performed. The firings commenced by platoons, sub and grand divisions. *A gun.* The whole army formed in three columns, and marched in a very small compass of ground. *A gun.* The whole army formed in battalions, and performed the quick firing, which lasted near twenty minutes; assisted by the artillery,



tillery, to the astonishment of the Sovereign and the numerous spectators. The firings went on by regiments, and brigades. *A gun.* The right wing fired; *A gun!* The left wing fired. *Two guns.* The whole line fired as one man; the line then formed the match; the flanking companies began to harass the line; detached parties were sent to disperse them; the various attempts were made, alternately repulsing each other. The mode of securing the artillery and baggage on the march was well exhibited.

The line now dividing from the Suffolk and Cheshire, several excellent manœuvres were practised prior to a general engagement. When the action became general, it exhibited the greatest resemblance of a field-fight the Sovereign had yet seen.

In this action the grenadiers and light-infantry companies, under the Duke of Grafton, Colonels Williamson and Gladwin, exhibited many grand manœuvres, and gave great satisfaction to the King.

'Twas now half past three o'clock, when his Majesty signified his intention of quitting the field; the whole formed again in one line, and fired the *feu de joye*.

THE review was happily attended with but one accident, that of a firelock bursting in the hands of a soldier of the 59th, by which his face was desperately cut.

THE corps of artillery was very much offended at not being introduced according to custom, before any other corps of the army; the officers expressed their dissatisfaction, and went away. Mr. Keppel sent after the Lieutenent Colonel, and appologized in the King's name.

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

N.2

LET

LETTER XXVII.

**T**IS very true, my dear madam, your last letter lies unanswered on my table; but could you have the conscience to expect I should attend to little domestic tales, when I had such subjects as Reviews, &c. at command?

**FERDINAND** sets off to-morrow to pay his devoirs.—I beg you will be ready to receive him in all your best airs and graces.

None but the brave deserve the fair!

And if standing fire at exercise, and bearing all the toils of a (holiday) Camp constitutes bravery, he is as brave a fellow as any in the kingdom: and take notice, it is the best you can say of most of the Red-Coats now in England.

**FERDINAND** has shewn himself not a little headstrong in the article of his journey; for we shall all be down with you in less than a month.—But he would wait no months, not he.—He has Sir Ferdinand's licence in his pocket, and so flies on the wings of Love to-morrow.—He might have added Gratitude; for the Baronet has been a most unexampled friend to him.

**THE** little month I mention will, I suppose, however, be sufficient time for you to say all the soft things in, that is needful to say before matrimony.—I just give you this hint, as it is whispered, that on our joining you a double wedding will take place, and furnish subject-matter for our  
public

public prints. Then, also, will you see a pattern for all conjugal conduct in my dear amiable mother :

In every gesture, dignity and love !

nor will you wonder to hear my father pronounce himself the happiest of men.

BETWEEN ourselves, Lydia and her Lord and Master seem a lesser order of beings, in every respect, when placed near this pair ; though in a state of separation, if I may so call it, they have their advantage over two-thirds of the species.

I SHALL pass through London ; therefore, if you have any commands *en habillement*, dispatch them speedily, that they may be executed.—When I am on the wing, nothing shall retard my flight !—However, spare me not. I shall think it no trouble, provided your requests are well timed. So wishing you all imaginable felicity with your swain—a felicity which none but minds like ours can taste—the sweet compound of friendship, of gratitude, of love—I leave you to add all remembrances you see fit from the circle at Mildmay-Hall ; and only ask you, till we meet, to believe me

Your most affectionate

ELLA RIVERS.

F I N I S